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CONGREGATIO MISSIONIS

VINCENTIANA

*COMMENTARIUM OFFICIALE
ALTERNIS PRODIENS MENSIBUS*

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CURIA GENERALITIA

Via di Bravetta, 159
00164 ROMA

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VINCENTIANA

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MISSIONIS ALTERNIS MENSIBUS EDITUM

Apud Curiam Generalitiam: Via di Bravetta, 159 - 00164 ROMA
ANNO XXIII (1979)

Fasciculi 1 Jan.-Feb.



IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

LE PAPE JEAN-PAUL II

Impressions et souvenirs d'un confrère polonais

Bronislaw Sienczac, C.M.

Le cardinal Wojtyla connaissait la C.M.
et l'appréciait déjà

Le nom du cardinal Wojtyla aujourd'hui le pape Jean-Paul II est partout dans toutes les bouches. Il serait facile de créer autour de lui une atmosphère de légende et de lui donner un profil tenant du mythe. Mais il n'a pas besoin de légende, elle ne pourrait guère lui être utile, tout comme elle ne nous sert pas à grand chose à nous missionnaires de St. Vincent en Pologne, qui l'avons connu de près.



STEMMA IOANNIS PAULI PP. II

La C.M. est florissante en Pologne, vu le nombre de ses maisons, de ses œuvres et de ses confrères, et le cardinal Wojtyla la connaissait bien. Quels rapports avait-il avec elle et en particulier avec sa province de Pologne? Il est juste de faire d'abord remarquer qu'il était bien dans le caractère du cardinal et dans son programme de ne privilégier aucun institut religieux, mais aussi de n'en négliger aucun. Malgré cela le P. Kapusciak assistant général a été étonné et ému de la cordialité et de l'estime dont a fait preuve le cardinal Wojtyla à l'égard de notre Père général venu faire une visite en Pologne. Ce premier contact amical ne resta pas le seul. Au moins à deux reprises au cours de ses brefs séjours à

Rome, le cardinal Wojtyła a rendu visite à notre Père général au nouveau siège de notre Curie, via di Bravetta.

Mais c'est le P. Kapusciak qui a eu avec le pape Wojtyła les rapports les plus suivis et les plus profonds. Il a d'abord été son élève à l'université catholique de Lublin où l'actuel Souverain pontife était professeur d'Ethique, puis il le retrouva à Cracovie, étant devenu à son tour professeur de Psychologie dans ce Séminaire que le cardinal suivait attentivement, le considérant comme la pépinière de choix de son clergé. Le séminaire était en totale harmonie avec le programme que se fixait le cardinal Wojtyła: donner une forte impulsion aux deux secteurs qu'il jugeait fondamentaux pour l'Eglise de Pologne: la formation intellectuelle et scientifique, et la formation pastorale.

Il a travaillé avec nous

Les missionnaires de St. Vincent ont une belle et déjà longue tradition en Pologne, particulièrement à Cracovie où ils sont arrivés en 1682 pour prendre la direction du Séminaire établi dans la citadelle. Par la suite ils construisirent l'actuel grand séminaire diocésain, où jusqu'en 1904 tout le clergé du diocèse a reçu sa formation sacerdotale.

Jusqu'au dernier conclave le cardinal Wojtyła était un des habitués du Séminaire où il venait très volontiers. Depuis longtemps déjà il s'était réservé la prédication du triduum qui, tous les ans prépare chez nous, la fête de la Conversion de St. Paul. Nous nous rappellerons longtemps ces rencontres de prière et de fraternité.

Nos confrères de Cracovie ont constitué dans les années passées, en annexe au grand séminaire un Studium de théologie, fréquenté par les divers ordres religieux de la région. Le niveau et le sérieux de l'enseignement qui y est dispensé, a donné l'idée au cardinal Wojtyła de faire de ce Studium théologique un Institut pontifical de théologie dans l'intention de l'agréger plus tard, comme faculté de théologie, à l'Université des Jagellons qui est une université d'Etat. Espérons qu'aujourd'hui, les rapports entre l'Etat et l'Eglise polonaise s'améliorant, le plan du cardinal Wojtyła pourra se réaliser et que l'Université d'Etat pourra s'enrichir d'une Faculté de Théologie, qui existait autrefois et qui avait été supprimée en 1954.

Il nous aimait

L'amitié du pape Jean-Paul II pour la Congrégation n'est pas seulement d'ordre pastoral, mais elle a également un caractère personnel. Il s'est toujours considéré comme un disciple fidèle de notre confrère le P. Michalski, philosophe de renommée mondiale et recteur de l'Université de Cracovie en 1932-1933. Cette amitié n'a pas été un moment sans lendemain, elle a continué à l'égard de la personne du successeur du P. Michalski, le P. Usowicz, qui a été le dernier doyen de la Faculté de philosophie à l'Université des Jagellons. Il échangeait avec lui des impressions, des projets, des conseils, il a voulu qu'il soit proche de lui à Cracovie et jusqu'à la veille du dernier conclave, il s'entretenait fraternellement avec lui.

Le soutien moral constitue toujours un précieux encouragement, mais parfois il ne suffit pas, il faut aussi une aide financière. Le cardinal Wojtyła l'a apportée généreusement à notre confrère le Professeur Schletz fondateur de l'Institut d'histoire et auteur de 50 volumes sur l'histoire et sur la culture de la Pologne

catholique, portant le titre «Nasza Przeszłość» (Notre Passé). Seul un geste aussi généreux que celui du cardinal Wojtyła a pu permettre la réalisation de cette importante œuvre historique, malgré les difficultés matérielles dans lesquelles se débat l'Eglise de Pologne.

Animateur parmi le peuple et parmi la jeunesse étudiante de notre paroisse

Le pape Jean-Paul II a une espèce de culte pour l'intelligence mise au service de Dieu et de l'humanité. Mais son attention pastorale et son zèle ne se limitaient pas aux milieux intellectuels, car c'est avec le même élan qu'il s'attaquait aux problèmes de la vie paroissiale et qu'il s'intéressait à la vie du peuple des humbles qui gravite autour de l'Eglise. L'auteur de ces lignes qui a exercé son ministère sacerdotal dans la paroisse Notre Dame de Lourdes tenue par les confrères peut rendre témoignage du zèle pastoral du cardinal Wojtyła. Il peut dire aussi quelle considération il avait pour le travail des confrères: l'un d'entre eux le P. Albino Malysiak a été élevé alors à la dignité épiscopale. Cette paroisse compte 30.000 habitants, auxquels s'ajoutent 15.000 étudiants universitaires originaires de diverses régions de Pologne.

Une telle masse de jeunes universitaires suscite indubitablement une grande espérance pour demain, mais elle soulève aussi bien des préoccupations. Et il est naturel que le cardinal cherche personnellement le contact avec cette masse pleine d'ardeur de jeunes qui en sont à un âge merveilleusement rempli d'avenir!

Pendant le peu de temps que j'ai passé dans la paroisse, le cardinal Wojtyła est venu à deux reprises leur prêcher une retraite pendant une semaine, en préparation à la fête de Pâques. L'église était bondée à chaque fois. Il avait aussi un autre rendez-vous avec les jeunes, toujours précédé d'une retraite spirituelle, il consistait dans la préparation de la fête de Noël, dont le sommet était la «fraction du pain» (Oplatek). C'est un usage cher aux Polonais; il consiste à échanger les vœux de Noël en se partageant ce même pain qui va être utilisé lors de la célébration eucharistique. A la fin de la messe il avait l'habitude de se mêler à eux, en dehors de tout protocole, pour sentir la chaleur humaine de cette foule en fête, parler à chacun, longuement, sans souci des heures qui passaient (parfois de 7h. du soir à minuit) car le véritable amour ne se vit pas suspendu à une horloge.

Il s'était formé, au service de la paroisse un groupe de 150 personnes, remarquables par leur culture ou par leur engagement apostolique, le cardinal Wojtyła avait des rencontres régulières avec ce groupe. Leur collaboration lui avait beaucoup servi pour préparer les grandes lignes du synode diocésain qui devrait avoir lieu le 8 mai 1979 et se conclure par une session solennelle. Parmi les dispositions prévues, se détache particulièrement un décret sur l'apostolat des laïcs qui semble refléter tout à fait l'esprit de notre vie paroissiale.

Une soutane qui n'a pu être cousue

La grande presse internationale de ces temps derniers a donné un relief particulier aux aspects les plus remarquables de la riche personnalité de Jean-Paul II: sa profonde culture philosophique et théologique, son goût pour les voyages d'études et de contacts humains, sa veine poétique coulant de source, mais elle a oublié de souligner qu'il est avant tout un Bon Pasteur, et un saint prêtre. Il ne lui déplait pas d'entrer inopinément dans une église et de s'asseoir

au confessionnal tout comme un humble prêtre tout ordinaire, attendant les fidèles au sacrement du pardon.

Une anecdote. A Cracovie le cardinal Wojtyła s'était choisi comme tailleur personnel un de nos frères coadjuteurs, le frère Włoszczyk. Tailler un habit, à la manière artisanale, c'est entrer d'une certaine manière en contact avec la personne à qui l'habit servira. En caresser l'étoffe, la modeler d'une main sûre et légère, ce sont là des gestes quasi maternels. Il faut mesurer mentalement le tour des épaules, le mouvement des bras, la souplesse de la vie, en un mot on a l'impression que de ce vêtement tout prêt à être endossé, la personne elle-même va surgir.

Il y a une dizaine d'années, le frère tailleur avait formulé le souhait, mais c'était presque un vœu, de faire pour le cardinal Wojtyła une soutane de pape, toute blanche. «Qui sait si ce jour n'arrivera pas?» pensait-il. Ce jour est arrivé, mais notre frère tailleur n'est plus. Il est mort l'année dernière. Le pape Wojtyła a maintenant des tailleurs pontificaux à son service, mais il a encore besoin du bon frère Włoszczyk. Il l'a déclaré le jour même de son élection, quand du balcon de la basilique St. Pierre il a demandé l'aide des prières de toutes les bonnes âmes, les prières des vivants naturellement mais aussi celles de nos chers défunts.

Le frère Włoszczyk peut considérer que son vœu est exaucé, car il peut offrir à son illustre client une aide beaucoup plus importante que de lui avoir taillé une soutane.

(*Bollettino Vincenziano*, Roma, gen.-feb. 1979, pp. 9-12)

CURIA GENERALITIA

EPISTOLA CIRCULARIS SUPERIORIS GENERALIS

MATERIA:

- I. Estne Sanctus Vincentius vivus in nobis? (1-8)
- II. De Conventu Generali 1980 ab omnibus sine exceptione praeparando (9-14)

DC 78/432-A
October 12, 1978

Dear Confreres,

The grace of Our Lord be with us forever!

1. During our annual retreat we had an opportunity to listen at length to Saint Vincent speaking to us. Naturally we asked ourselves if Saint Vincent is still speaking to the people and giving them assistance, not only through his writings, but also by what *we are* and what *we do*.

Many are happy to venerate the relics of Saint Vincent, but what our world needs, what it expects much more than relics, is the action of Saint Vincent, Saint Vincent himself. Today, as in the past, rich and poor can receive much from St. Vincent. By meeting him, seeing him, they can be aided and saved by him.

Through contact with him, they can be evangelized, transformed by the Good News, because in Saint Vincent they find the Savior and they are possessed by Jesus Christ.

2. Applying these reflections to ourselves, we asked: Is Saint Vincent truly alive in the general direction of the Company? Is he discovered, seen, recognized in what we do in the Curia? Is he found in our letters? in our method of visiting the Provinces and meeting the Confreres there? in all our efforts to animate the Congregation? Do those who deal with us hear Jesus Christ announced by Saint Vincent? Can they encounter Saint Vincent in us, not only the Saint Vincent who smiles, but the Saint Vincent who brings them charity and truth, who knows how to tell them that he does not agree with them and that they must be converted? Does the Curia have an excessive regard for pluralism in individuals and in the provinces? Are we too conciliatory? Do we reply to the desires of the Confreres who,

perhaps by simplifying too many things, wait for us to guide them, a little like the prophets of the Old Testament conducted the chosen people toward the promised land which God had reserved for them? Do we disappoint those who would wish to see in our words and actions the creative and courageous actions similar to those of Saint Vincent? — We endeavored to make this examination of conscience ourselves.

3. Now we would like to see with you, what kind of Vincentian we must be in order that Saint Vincent may be able to live in us.

— I am not going to give here a definition of a good Vincentian, but rather to cite some genuine Vincentians, other Saint Vincents, whom I have met in your Provinces. When I met them, I instinctively thought of those whom the Church has placed on the altar. You share this experience and you know well that in our Community, weak and deficient though it may be, there are Saints.

4. In what traits, what attitudes of these Vincentians, have I discovered Saint Vincent?

— They are wholly preoccupied with bringing all men to the knowledge of God and to a life conformed to this faith in the dignity of the individual. By preference, they wish to communicate this knowledge to the poor in whom they see those most capable of understanding and welcoming the Gospel, the salvation which Jesus Christ brings them. For these missionaries, every man is valuable, especially if he is poor. This is so true that in one of our Missions, the horse belonging to one of the missionaries stops of his own accord each time he meets a man, a child, an old man or woman. Then the missionary greets them, listens to them, and speaks to everyone. Even his horse has become "missionary".

— These good Vincentians seem to draw their strength from their union with God, nourished by prayer. — Sometimes there are those who speak but little. — They are not easily swayed by ideologies. Their contact with God, their attention to men, their fraternal love for the poor, render them extremely enterprising. They do not forget that initiative, creativity, adaptation, are traits characteristic of a Vincentian and of their community, Saint Vincent being their living model. These people have a very silent patience, even when obedience asks of them something very difficult. They can then suffer intensely and pass through a spiritual night, but even in this night they continue to be a light for others.

— At a time when there is such question about giving to each

one the opportunity of self development, self fulfillment, of utilizing one's creativity, it is comforting to meet Confreres who live the very Vincentian virtue of availability and who take their personal share of the work for the common good, as soon as obedience asks it. Availability – this virtue considered as old-fashioned and blind – is it not capable of truly enlightening and rejuvenating our Company? Can we not apply to it the words of Pope John Paul I, when he compared the Faith to an old blind woman who alone was able to show the way to a poet who was lost in a forest?

I take this occasion to say at least once to you, my Confreres, who entered the Company with the desire to follow this ideal of working directly for the poor or in the missions, and who have been led by circumstances and by obedience to spend your life in a secretariat, in a teaching post or in the treasurer's office; let me assure you that you are in my opinion true sons of Saint Vincent and that his blessing is upon you.

– In them I have found our Vincentian virtues very much alive. I have marveled at the sight of their simplicity and meekness. I have found among them, not only a personal humility, but also a corporate humility in regard to the entire Company. Their zeal was nourished by sacrifices, by mortification.

– All of them live in fidelity to the Word of God and to its translation into our customs, our Common Rules, our Constitutions and our sound traditions. In everything they are guided by Chapter II of our Rules.

5. Like all of us, these men have their limitations of intelligence, of formation, of character. They should be regarded as a peasant regards an apple tree in front of his house. One year he receives from this apple tree good fruit in abundance. Another year he gets only a small amount of fruit of an inferior quality. Yet this peasant continues to appreciate his apple tree in proportion to the sum total of the harvesting. It is especially at the moment when his tree is dying, worn out by its many years of production, that he can realize all that it has given him.

6. These Confreres oblige us to reflect, to make an examination of conscience on the way in which we ourselves translate into concrete realities, personal and community, what we know to be the Gospel lived by Saint Vincent.

These men show us that it is possible to live "according to Saint Vincent" in our milieu, even today. You will tell me: "These are special cases. But in the community in which I find myself and in the Company as a whole, do they live this ideal

of effective love of the poor and of union with God, this availability to go here or wherever we are asked to go?"

Personally, I see authentic progress along this path. I am convinced that the Holy Spirit is continually urging us to realize this ideal. It is up to us to open ourselves more and more to His impulse in order that the Company may become more Vincentian, more ecclesial, more universal and more available, completely immersed in the work of evangelization, with great mobility to obey the Spirit.

7. These living models are not the only ones forcing us to this examination of conscience. Since the Council, our experiences, our successes, our failures, our inquiries, our studies of Saint Vincent, our fraternal dialogue sometimes so difficult, our Assemblies, all have aided us to define just what the Congregation of the Mission is and what Saint Vincent expects of us in the Church today.

8. So here we are! Does each one of us, personally and in union with our Confreres, pay sufficient attention to all that we have rediscovered? Confreres, houses and provinces, have we sufficiently concentrated our attention on this teaching which is our own? How many occasions of Vincentian renewal have come to nothing because the Constitutions and Statutes and the Declarations of 1974 were not welcomed and assimilated? — It was judged good to search in other directions for the inspiration of our life and our work!

9. We are now at a decisive moment in the History of Salvation. We are at a point where the Church asks us to take up again our Constitutions and to define our identity. This is the task facing the General Assembly of 1980. That this Assembly may complete the work of preceding Assemblies, every one of us must participate. *Each one* of us must collaborate therein, despite all our difficulties.

10. In writing these lines, I am thinking of you Confreres in the bush country who rack your brains to see how you can fill the empty stomachs of children, how you can convey to pagan hearts the Gospel with all its consequences, how you can make of your baptized converts true Christians. I think of you, parish priests and curates, absorbed in the problems of your people and anxious to build with these families a Christian community. I think of you who correct the notebooks of your students far into the night. I think of you and I seem to hear your questions: "Must I, too, study the documents which come from the Preparatory Commission? Must I contribute something? Isn't it enough for some Confreres of the Province, more

familiar with these problems, to study all that and reply in the name of all of us? Our Province is so poor in personnel! May we not leave this responsibility to provinces better provided with qualified persons? Isn't what they are going to discuss at the General Assembly far from what we live each day?"

I see all these difficulties, but in all truth I would say to you that our Constitutions will influence our lives and will be valuable for the future, in the measure in which each one of us personally, each local community, each Province, small or large, will bring their contribution to the preparation of the Assembly.

After the Assembly, those who have refused their collaboration will be the first to say that the Constitutions have no value in their daily lives. Then take part in this preparation by study, prayer and sacrifice! Encourage each other mutually and avoid everything that could sow seeds of doubt on the utility of this enterprise.

11. I seem to hear still other voices: "We will produce a new text, this time definitive. However, will this change our lives? Will it renew the face of the Company?" The reply which I am going to give you may appear legalistic, but it reflects the experience of the entire Church and, I would say, the experience which you yourselves live each day in your Province. You see how one is disoriented, how one loses time creating everything anew and without reference to a constitutional framework, well thought out.

12. I know well that the Law today is often regarded as useless and even annoying, but past history shows that it is indispensable for the birth, development and fruitfulness of all religious and civil societies. Saint Vincent did not waste his time in useless searching. However, for the greater part of his life, he worked to formulate the Rules of his Company, laws all the more necessary to find because, for his completely original society, it was a question of life or death. It was necessary to formulate Rules flowing from what the Community actually was and, because of this, capable of assuring the development of his specific mission.

13. Saint Vincent and his confreres undertook this patient research for their own times and for the immediate future. We successors are living through such accelerated changes in a short space of time, that the Church is asking each one of us to participate in the adaptation of the law of Saint Vincent for the continuation of his mission in the heart of this changing world.

I see only one way to assure this. In the time which remains from now until 1980, we must continue the work of our

aggiornamento, demanded by Vatican II. This work has been set in motion and pursued through all these years of our community reflection, by all our efforts, successful or not, to live the Gospel authentically and as Saint Vincent indicated it to us. Now the moment will come, with the definitive draft, when we can say what Saint Vincent said when he entrusted the Rules to the Community: "You now have in writing what you have been practicing."

14. In writing this letter to you, we are all under the shock of the death of Pope John Paul I and I can still hear his words spoken in his last public audience, September 27, giving us Saint Vincent as the model of charity towards God and towards our brothers, especially the poorest. He invited us to continual progress in this charity. This constant progress will only be possible if our Constitutions of 1980 become for our charity an inexhaustible source of inspiration which will show us the road we should follow.

In the name of all the members of the Curia, I send you our fraternal greetings.

Your devoted confrere in St. Vincent,

James W. Richardson, C.M.
Superior General

LITTERAE CIRCULARES SUPERIORIS GENERALIS

1. De voce passiva Visitatorum

DC 78/432-B
October 12, 1978

Note pour Monsieur Le Visiteur et la Commission Préparatoire de l'Assemblée

1. Si le mandat du Visiteur expire avant l'Assemblée Provinciale de 1979, le Visiteur a voix passive pour l'Assemblée Domestique et l'Assemblée Provinciale.

2. Si le mandat du Visiteur expire après l'Assemblée Provinciale de 1979 et avant l'Assemblée Générale de 1980, le Visiteur a voix passive pour l'Assemblée de 1980.

James W. Richardson, C.M.
Superior General

En l'absence du Père Général, j'ai le plaisir de vous envoyer cette note, avec mes cordiales salutations.

Rafael Sáinz C.M., Vic. Gen.

2. De voce activa et passiva ad Conventum Provinciale

DC 78/529

December 22, 1978

Note to the: Visitors
Preparatory Commissions of the Provincial Assemblies

Active and Passive Voice: Assemblies

The following comments and directives are given as interpretations by the Superior General and the General Council of the *Constitutions and Statutes* of the Congregation of the Mission in reference to the General Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies held as preparatory to the General Assembly, and questions of active and passive voice for, and in, these Assemblies.

1. We call your attention to articles 188 and 189 of the *C. and S.* of the Congregation of the Mission and point out the following:

a) Definitive vinculation or incorporation in the Congregation is required for active voice in the election of delegates to the Provincial Assemblies.

b) One has passive voice, i.e., may be a member of the Provincial Assembly, elected or otherwise, only if he has been definitively incorporated into the Congregation for three years and has completed his twenty-fifth year of age.

c) Those who live outside the Congregation by reason of indult from the Holy See or permission of the Superior General have neither active nor passive voice. The same applies as well to those who may be actually living outside the Congregation without indult or permission and without regularization of their status.¹ (This does not apply to those who may be living

¹ Cf. *Vincentiana*, 1973, pp. 24-25.

outside a community house with proper permission for reasons of apostolate, study, etc.)

d) Special norms governing active and passive voice of Bishops, vicars, prefects and administrators apostolic are found in article 189, § 2 and § 3.

2. Norms of Provincial Assemblies enacted in the Provinces and approved by the Superior General may provide for an enlarged membership in the Provincial Assembly to include members of the province who would not have passive voice according to article 188 of the *C. and S.* Such provincial norms are approved with the following provisos concerning the relationship of a Provincial Assembly to the General Assembly:

a) Only those members of the Provincial Assembly who have been definitively incorporated into the Congregation for three years and have completed their twenty-fifth year of age, and those who may not fulfill these two conditions, but are *ex officio* members of the Provincial Assembly, may vote for the delegates to be elected to the General Assembly, and

b) Only these same members may vote for postulata and other matters to be referred to the General Assembly.

James W. Richardson, C.M., Sup. Gen.

3. De libro D. Gonthier:

Dieu parle à son peuple aujourd'hui

January 12, 1978

To the Visitors

Dear Father,

The grace of Our Lord be with us always and especially during the New Year!

You will receive from Paris a copy of the book just published by Father Gonthier and entitled:

“Dieu parle à son Peuple aujourd'hui”.

This book is an account of the popular missions preached in France by the Province of Paris “under the tent” since 1947 and continuously thereafter. I am doubtful if this will be translated from the French. Surely there must be someone in the Province who can read the book and help to communicate the substance of this experience to the rest of the Confreres.

It seems to me that this is an excellent example of a missionary spirit which is much alive in the Congregation today in a number of Provinces. Without doubt in your own Province you are finding many new ways to reach the people with the Word of God and to give competent catechetical instruction to the children and to the poor who have been deprived of the opportunity of Catholic schools and normal pastoral care.

May God bless all that is done in your Province to evangelize the Poor. This great work of Saint Vincent will remain with us and bring great blessings from God, if each of us is sincerely resolved to do his part for the renewal of the Congregation.

Your devoted confrere in Saint Vincent,

James W. Richardson, C.M.
Superior General

4. De inscriptione litterarum ad Curiam Generalitiam

DC 77/540-B sn 78/34-E
die 20 mensis ianuarii 1978

Carissime Confrater,

In the Spring of 1974, Monsignor Willy Albisetti placed at our disposal his Post Office Box 3491 at 6830 Chiasso, Switzerland, and our Confreres of Como forwarded the mail to the Curia. In the name of the entire Congregation, I thank Msgr. Albisetti and the Confreres of Como for their devoted service.

The Roman post office now seems to be functioning better. Therefore we ask you:

Please do not send any more mail to Chiasso.

Address all mail directly to: Via di Bravetta, 159
00164 Rome, Italy

Addictissimus in S. Vincentio

James W. Richardson, C.M.
Superior Generalis

5. De mysteriis temporis Nativitatis

Christmas 1978

My dear Sisters and Brothers,

May the grace of Our Lord Jesus fill His Church and all the Vincentian Family and inspire us with His love for all men!

This is a happy feast, celebrated all over the world. The great celebration is in the Kingdom of God in the hearts of men, especially in all of those united in the Church by the mark of Baptism as adopted brothers and sisters of Jesus. In the Community we celebrate Christmas as a time to bring us close together in adoration before the mystery of Christ's birth. We are there in memory of that historic night when Christ was born and we adore Him with Mary and Joseph and the poor peasants who came first to share this greatest event of human history.

The feast of Christmas; and then the Motherhood of Mary, beginning the New Year; and the Epiphany, manifesting the Lord to the distant nations, bring all of us closer together. We greet one another very simply. We do all that we can to manifest our great affection for our brothers and sisters and we thank one another for their greetings and for their kindness toward us. This is what I want to do myself for everyone of you.

This is a time for you all to be particularly aware of your one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. You have witnessed in quick succession the passing of Pope Paul VI, the election, the bright illumination of Pope John Paul I and his sudden disappearance; and finally the coming of Cardinal Charles Wojtyla into this office of the Vicar of Christ on earth. God speaks to you through these events. One thing He says most clearly: be united to the Holy Father with the full attention of your understanding and with the complete devotion of your heart; unite yourselves to Christ and to your brethren under the guidance of this remarkable person whom the Lord has given to you. Again you must be aware of your place in the universal Church as you engage yourselves to it in the work of your Assemblies. What you will do in the General Assemblies, above all, is to declare yourselves for what you are, to the Holy Father and through him to the whole Church.

May the blessing of the Lord Jesus be upon you and strengthen you for the service you offer Him during the year of 1979.

Your devoted servant in the Lord, in Mary His Mother, and
in our Saints,

James W. Richardson, C.M.
Superior General

LE QUATRIEME CENTENAIRE DE LA NAISSANCE DE SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

1581-1981

Nous fêterons en 1981 le *Quatrième Centenaire de la Naissance de Saint Vincent de Paul*. A cette occasion, *Ranquines* et la *Chapelle* du «Berceau de Saint Vincent de Paul» recevront de très nombreux visiteurs et pèlerins du monde entier. Nous voudrions que chacune et chacun s'y sentent véritablement accueillis et que ces nombreux pèlerinages collectifs ou privés, puissent se dérouler dans les meilleures conditions spirituelles et matérielles.

Depuis 5 ans, un effort d'accueil a été entrepris sur le lieu de naissance de Saint Vincent et les premiers résultats ont été impressionnants, parfois bouleversants. Parmi les quelques 30 ou 40.000 pèlerins qui passent chaque année, des témoignages nombreux permettent d'affirmer que Saint Vincent a encore beaucoup à apprendre à nos contemporains et qu'il est toujours proche de ceux qui souffrent.

Celles et ceux d'entre vous qui sont venus au Berceau de Saint Vincent de Paul, ces dernières années, ont pu remarquer l'état de délabrement de *La Chapelle* et la nécessité de travaux à la Maison de *Ranquines* et dans quelques *installations d'accueil*. Nous croyons qu'avec le généreux concours de la grande famille vinentienne, il nous serait possible de redonner à ces lieux qui nous sont chers leur sobre dignité pour le 4^e Centenaire.

Nous n'avons aucunement l'intention d'organiser, en 1981, de grandes manifestations. Pour rester dans la ligne des humbles origines de Saint Vincent et demeurer fidèles à son Esprit, nous envisageons plutôt d'attirer et de provoquer des rencontres, des rassemblements de prière, des retraites pour les jeunes, les militants, les religieuses, les prêtres et, évidemment, pour les multiples branches de la Famille Vincentienne.

C'est pour assurer des conditions convenables à l'accueil et au pèlerinage que nous nous permettons de faire appel à votre générosité. Plus que d'importantes sommes... que, bien sûr, nous accepterions avec grande reconnaissance... nous souhaitons que chacun des membres de notre grande famille participe,

selon ses moyens, à ce projet conçu uniquement pour un plus grand rayonnement de la Spiritualité Vincentienne, dans l'Eglise et le monde d'aujourd'hui.

Nous avons évidemment parlé de cet appel à nos Supérieurs qui nous y ont encouragé. Par honnêteté, et pour donner quelque idée des frais à envisager, nous faisons suivre cette lettre des grandes lignes d'un devis de réparations indispensables pour la Chapelle; et, bien sûr, nous vous tiendrons au courant de l'emploi des fonds collectés.

D'avance, nous vous remercions de votre aide généreuse et espérons que, grâce à vous, 1981 pourra constituer une étape importante pour le rayonnement de Saint Vincent au lieu où il naquit, et où, déjà, tant de pèlerins viennent se nourrir de la pensée de notre Fondateur et s'inspirer de son action.

Veillez adresser vos dons au:

«Centre Vincentien»
Le Hillon (Berceau)
SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
40990 SAINT PAUL LES DAX - FRANCE

CCP. Centre Vincentien - Bordeaux 724.57 B

Nous prenons l'engagement de n'utiliser les fonds que pour

- la restauration de *la Chapelle*,
- l'entretien de *Ranquines*,
- et l'accueil des *pèlerins*.

Eventuellement, le surplus serait versé en totalité *aux pauvres*.

Soeur Maury, Visitatrice FdIC	Père Morin, Visiteur C.M.
Province FdIC de Toulouse	Province C.M. de Toulouse

*Devis établi après avis de la Commission d'Art Sacré
du Diocèse d'Aire et de Dax*

ESTIMATION POUR LA CHAPELLE

Location d'échafaudage
Protection d'ouvrages d'art

25.000 Fr. = \$US 5.952

Réparation en recherche de l'ossature-bois
(voûte - nef)

Remplacement en recherche de pierres de
taille (transept)

25.000 Fr. = \$US 5.952

Restauration en recherche d'enduits sur
mur et voûtes

Restauration - encadrements tableaux

Peintures intérieures

200.000 Fr. = \$US 47.619

Décoration

Chauffage - électricité - éclairage

45.000 Fr. = \$US 10.714

Ravalement façade

10.000 Fr. = \$US 2.380

Travaux - autel - statues

40.000 Fr. = \$US 9.523

Chapelle du Saint Sacrement

16.000 Fr. = \$US 3.890

361.000 Fr. = \$US 85.945

ARCHIVES DE LA CURIE GENERALE DE LA CONGREGATION DE LA MISSION

Adresse: via di Bravetta 159, 00164 Roma - Tel. 62.23.241;
62.25.941.

Admission des chercheurs: Après une demande écrite, adressée au Père Général, accompagnée d'un mot de recommandation de l'Evêque du diocèse (si c'est un prêtre séculier), de son Père Provincial pour un Religieux.

Limite chronologique accessible des manuscrits: Les années avant 1915.

Horaire: à fixer avec l'Archiviste (fermeture estivale: les mois de juillet et août).

Introduction

La Congrégation de la Mission a été fondée à Paris par St. Vincent de Paul, le 17 avril 1625; elle fut approuvée par l'Archevêque de Paris François de Gondy dès le 24 avril 1625. S. S. Urbain VIII approuvait à son tour la Congrégation de la Mission le 12 janvier 1633, par la Bulle «*Salvatoris nostri*».

La Congrégation est composée de Prêtres et Frères. Elle a pour fin: la prédication de l'Evangile aux Pauvres, la formation

du Clergé. Pour remplir ces divers buts elle donne des missions dans les Paroisses, dirige des Grands et Petits Séminaires, des Collèges, des Universités, des Paroisses. Elle a aussi la charge de diocèses missionnaires en Ethiopie, Inde, Indonésie, Madagascar.

Elle compte actuellement 43 Provinces et 4 Vice-Provinces. Ses 5.660 membres se trouvent dans les cinq parties du monde.

Les Archives de la Curie Générale

Les Archives sont formées par la correspondance échangée entre l'Administration Centrale de la Congrégation et ses Provinces, ou ses membres.

Ces archives sont divisées en trois Epoque: 1) la partie historique, d'avant 1915, dite: Pars antiqua; 2) la «Pars nova» de 1915 à 1968; 3) la partie qui se trouve au Secrétariat général, de 1968 à nos jours.

Pour les manuscrits, seule la partie historique d'avant 1915 est accessible aux chercheurs.

Chaque Epoque est divisée en trois sections: 1. Administration centrale, 2. Provinces et Maisons, 3. Dossiers personnels.

Il faut signaler que les archives qui se trouvent à Rome, sont en grande partie formées de documents du XX^e siècle. Nous avons perdu, à la suite de la révolution française, les archives d'avant 1789 (dont une grande partie se trouve aux Archives Nationales de Paris et à la Bibliothèque Nationale).

De même, lors du transfert de la Curie Générale de Paris à Rome en 1963, les archives des Provinces d'*origine française* (Algérie, Perse, Syrie, Turquie, Madagascar, Réunion, Chine), sont restées à notre Maison-Mère, 95 rue de Sèvres, à Paris.

Ce qui fait que pour les Provinces mentionnées plus haut la partie historique, d'avant 1915, n'est pas grande en manuscrits; mais la partie Bibliographique est mieux fournie.

Index des Casiers de la «Pars antique» avant 1915 concernant l'Afrique du Nord, l'Asie, l'Océanie

Abyssinie-Ethiopie	I-1 (1838-1861, 1893, 1898)
Australie	I-8 1886-1913
Chine méridionale	VII-10 1906-1913
Chine septentrionale	VIII-1 1894-1913
Iran-Perse	IV-8 1864-
Levant (Syrie-Liban)	VI-10
Philippines	VII-5 1871-1914
Turquie-Grèce	VIII-9 1838, 1866, 1898

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N.B. Pour les Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission en français il existe un Index (ou Tables des Matières générales) depuis 1834 à 1885. C'est de cet Index qu'il est question dans la Bibliographie lorsque le nombre des pages est indiqué. De 1886 à 1963 il n'y a que les Tables des Matières de chaque Tome.

Pour le Personnel de la Congrégation, et leur localisation, voir l'édition annuelle du *Catalogue des Maisons et du Personnel de la Congrégation de la Mission* (depuis 1860 à nos jours).

Rome, le 28 septembre 1978.

Fr. Joseph Gazafy, C.M.
Archiviste

STUDIA ET COMMENTARIA

DE PRAEPARANDO CONVENTU GENERALI 1980

Emilio Cid

Summarium

I. Exemplum Sancti Vincentii

Sanctus Vincentius Regulas redegit lenta elaboratione per 33 annos, semper in collaboratione cum aliis confratribus, et consilium a viris peritis quaesivit. Bis Conventum Generalem adunavit ad Regulas examinandas.

Regulae Communes exprimunt: a) Proposita Sancti Vincentii pro tota Congregatione praesenti et futura, b) Proposita confratrum illius temporis, et c) praxim 33 annorum.

Hic processus exemplar nobis praebet pro elaboratione Constitutionum 1980.

II. Status praeparationis

Responsiones provinciarum. 39 provinciae responsionem dederunt quaestionibus a CPAG-80 propositis.

Labores CPAG-80. Responsionibus provinciarum magna cum attentione consideratis, Commissio Praeparatoria tria praecipue documenta redegit: *Instrumentum Laboris pro Conventibus Provincialibus* (Vinc. n. 5), *Quaestionarium*, et *Synthesis Responsionum* (Vinc. n. 6).

De methodo studii. In primis litterae introductoriae attente legendae sunt. Postea tres lectiones successivae totius Instrumenti utiles esse possunt:

Prima lectio pro responsione ad quaestiones quae faciles videntur.

Secunda lectio qua multae optiones faciles fieri possunt.

Pro *tertia lectione* et discussione manent tantum quaestiones difficiles et controversae.

III. Quaestiones controversae

Elenchus non praesumit esse exhaustivus, nec controversiam intendit sed tantum reflexionem stimulare.

De fine. Congregatio acceptat finem «Evangelizare Pauperibus» a Sancto Vincentio stabilitum, sed in applicationibus Constitutionum et Statutorum attenuatum videtur. Distinctio inter finem et ministeria flexibilitatem praebet provinciis in seligendis ministeriis.

De fine uno vel duplici (Evangelizare pauperibus et ecclesiasticos adiuvere). Solutio inveniri potest sine ulla exclusionem.

Evangelizatio est verbum quod optime describit actionem missionariam, sed evangelizatio intelligenda est in sensu integrali ut in documentis ecclesiasticis nostri temporis.

Definitio *votorum* quaerenda est et connexio cum incorporatione definitiva investiganda. Vota nostra evadere possunt publica si ligantur cum incorporatione definitiva.

Vita Communis affirmanda est ut regula ordinaria vitae Congregationis ad laborem communitarium fovendum et ad disponibilitatem confratrum servandam.

Instrumentum iuridicum est omnino necessarium pro Congregatione. Instrumentum essenziale in Constitutionibus includi debet. Normae accidentales sed cum functione vera ad Statuta relegari possunt. Decentratio actualis examini subicienda est.

IV. De forma litteraria Constitutionum

1. Claritas semper quaerenda. 2. Idea principalis modo directo principaliter exprimi debet non in orationibus subordinatis. 3. Citationes sive Evangelii sive Sancti Vincentii veram connexionem grammaticalem habere debent cum textu. 4. Intra Constitutiones etiam diversa sunt genera litteraria: genus iuridicum, genus indicativum pro primis capitulis de Fine et Spiritu, genus imperativum quando agitur de obligationibus. 5. Tractatio longa vel brevis secundum subiectum.

V. De continuitate et renovatione

Continuitas cum Sancto Vincentio fideliter quaerenda. ¿Estne nostra continuitas vitalis in periculo?

Renovatio est fructus conversionis personalis, sed eam Constitutiones stimulare debent. Motiva in Constitutionibus fortiter appellare debent ad nostram sensibilitatem Vincentianam erga pauperes et ad creativitatem. Motiva generalia et abstracta indifferentiam gignunt, motiva nimis concreta sunt caduca.

Viae apertae relinquendae sunt ad futuram evolutionem.

VI. De Regulis Communibus

Multi desiderant quod Regulae Communes aliquo modo obligatoriae declarentur. Forsitan Conventus posset eas declarare «Regula Fundamentalisi Seminarii Interni».

I. El ejemplo de San Vicente

El método

El método de San Vicente en la elaboración de las Reglas Comunes, de la Constituciones y de las Reglas de los oficios resulta todavía ejemplar para nosotros en 1979 que nos encontramos ante una coyuntura semejante. El siguió un proceso lento de 33 años, en colaboración con el grupo de fundadores, a los que consultaba continuamente, con expertos ajenos a la Congregación de los que se asesoraba en puntos vitales. Reunió dos Asambleas Generales para este fin, una en 1642 y otra en 1651. En 1655 tenía las Reglas aprobadas e impresas y destruyó

toda la edición para corregir los errores de imprenta y retocarlas al mismo tiempo, con lo cual necesitaron una nueva aprobación. Solo en 1658 estuvo en posición de entregarlas a la Compañía (COSTE, *St. Vincent de Paul*, 2, p. 9).

He aquí el resumen del discurso de San Vicente en la sesión de apertura de la primera Asamblea General en 1642: «Y el mismo día a las 4 después de la comida, estando la Compañía en asamblea, yo les dije que la primera cosa que había que tratar era sobre las Reglas de la Compañía, y les dije que les diría tres cosas: 1. Los motivos que tenemos para darnos a Dios para considerar, examinar y ajustar las Reglas que la Compañía necesitaba para conseguir su fin; y el primer motivo está tomado del fin de las mismas Reglas, que es el de unir espíritus diversos y hombres de diferentes naciones; el segundo de la duración de las mismas Reglas, que debe ser para siglos enteros. 2. En el segundo punto yo les mostré el proyecto de las Reglas y les hice una exposición. 3. En el tercer punto yo les dije algunos medios para obtener la gracia de Dios para conocer su voluntad sobre el proyecto de las Reglas: el primero era considerarlas en la presencia de Dios y mirando al fin de la Compañía, para ver si eran un medio para llegar a él; el segundo era deshacerse de los afectos, inclinaciones y aversiones particulares» (COSTE, XIII, 291).

San Vicente mismo, en colaboración con el grupo más allegado, había hecho un reglamento elemental para la Asamblea en el que insiste sobre el ambiente de oración y de confianza en Dios. El presidente «dará a cada uno la oportunidad de razonar sobre el proyecto y continuarán las sesiones hasta que todos hayan dicho su opinión» (*ibid.*, 190).

En la Asamblea de 1651 vuelve sobre las mismas ideas y añade una regla para el diálogo: «No interrumpir. Estimar los sentimientos de los otros mejores que los nuestros» (COSTE, XIII, 334).

Todos estos pensamientos de San Vicente son perfectamente válidos para nosotros en nuestro tiempo. Ciertamente no podemos hacernos la ilusión de hacer una obra para siglos, pero tampoco podemos perder de vista que intentamos algo permanente.

Las normas sobre el ambiente de oración, de buscar sinceramente la voluntad de Dios en orden a nuestro fin y en orden a elaborar un instrumento válido de convivencia para hombres diversos de naciones diversas sigue perfectamente actual.

La regla de superar las propias inclinaciones habría que traducirla para nosotros por la superación de los problemas concretos, personales y provinciales, para aspirar solamente al punto ideal.

La regla de no interrumpir, juzgar como cosa mejor lo que dicen otros, es una regla de relaciones humanas, que nos obliga a escuchar con atención y un esfuerzo de comprensión las opiniones de los demás.

San Vicente da todavía otra regla de guardar el secreto de lo tratado en las sesiones y no hablar de ello ni aún con los miembros de la misma asamblea. Esta regla es extraña para nosotros, pero su espíritu podría servirnos para evitar la formación de grupos cerrados de opinión.

El resultado

El 17 de mayo de 1658 es un momento feliz en la vida de San Vicente, cuando, al fin, puede entregar las Reglas a la comidad con los últimos retoques a su gusto.

Estas Reglas, visto el proceso de elaboración, representan:

- Los ideales de San Vicente para toda la Congregación presente y futura.
- Los ideales colectivos del grupo de fundadores, de los cuales San Vicente se asesoraba continuamente.
- La práctica de 33 años.

He aquí una verdadera meta ideal para la Asamblea de 1980.

En primer lugar es necesario traducir para nuestros días los *ideales de San Vicente*. El Concilio Vaticano II y los documentos postconciliares, en que la Iglesia se definió a si misma como la «Iglesia de los pobres», nos han hecho redescubrir a nosotros la actualidad de nuestra vocación vicenciana. Los estudios vicencianos recientes y la reflexión comunitaria de dos Asambleas Generales (1968-69 y 1974) nos han mentalizado lo suficiente para llegar a un consenso sobre nuestro fin y sobre nuestra identidad. Creo que hay signos positivos en muchas direcciones.

En segundo lugar, si las Constituciones han de estar encarnadas en nuestra vida, han de representar los *ideales comunes de la Congregación en 1980*. Esto exige de nosotros un doble trabajo. Primero una reflexión sincera sobre lo que significa nuestro ser vicenciano, nuestra comunidad y nuestro apostolado específico. También aquí se puede hablar hoy de una mentalidad mucho más vicenciana que en 1968.

En segundo lugar hay que estudiar el proyecto de Constituciones presentado por la Comisión Preparatoria para verificar hasta que punto responde a San Vicente y a nuestros ideales vicencianos.

El anteproyecto trata de responder a los deseos de las provincias expresados en las *respuestas*, pero al mismo tiempo es un instrumento que se puede perfeccionar y completar. Puede tener

lagunas doctrinales y jurídicas y puede haber omitido aspectos importantes de nuestra espiritualidad.

El mismo estudio del proyecto nos prepara a todos para un compromiso colectivo de realizarlo de la mejor manera posible, una vez aprobado.

En tercer lugar las Constituciones no pueden estar demasiado alejadas de la práctica actual, de tal manera que supongan un cambio sustancial en nuestra vida, pero tampoco se pueden justificar abusos y desviaciones. Creo que hay un esfuerzo, al menos en la aspiración, en todas las provincias por centrarse en los ministerios vicencianos y volver al espíritu de San Vicente.

II. Estado actual de la preparación de la Asamblea General 1980

La respuestas de las provincias

En la reunión de Roma (28.12.1976-2.1.1977) la Comisión Preparatoria presentó a las provincias cuatro tareas a realizar:

1. Separación de las Constituciones y Estatutos.
2. Propuestas de cambios en los mismos.
3. Respuestas a las preguntas formuladas al fin de los *Seis Estudios* preparatorios.
4. La aceptación o no del nuevo esquema de Constituciones propuesto por la misma Comisión.

Las provincias que dieron una respuesta más o menos completa son 39. Solo 8 no respondieron, algunas por razones fáciles de comprender, otras seguramente tienen sus razones. De todas maneras se puede hablar de una respuesta sustancial.

Las 39 respondieron de una manera más o menos completa a las preguntas formuladas al fin de los estudios.

Solo 19 hicieron la separación entre Constituciones y Estatutos, pero no siempre formularon sus observaciones a los artículos. Pocas provincias formularon artículos alternativos a los actuales.

Sobre el nuevo esquema de cuatro capítulos, 16 provincias lo aceptan, 5 lo rechazan, una propone otro distinto, la comisión interprovincial española completa el de la CPAG-80 y de otras 12 provincias no consta la respuesta.

Participación de la base

He querido hacer un análisis de la participación de la base en este proceso, pero resulta casi imposible. He aquí algunos datos solamente.

Cuatro comisiones interprovinciales hicieron una respuesta colectiva: Europa Central (7 provincias), Francia (2 provincias), Italia (3 provincias) y España (4 provincias). De las 7 de Europa Central, 5 hicieron además una respuesta de su provincia, y la provincia de Tolosa trató el material en su Asamblea Provincial.

En 6 provincias las respuestas fueron elaboradas por una Comisión Provincial, en 4 fueron elaboradas en la Asamblea Provincial, y en una en el Consejo Provincial.

Solo en 11 provincias son visibles las raíces de la base; en la mayoría de los casos es imposible percibir el grado de participación, ya que las provincias enviaron las respuestas sin ninguna indicación del método seguido.

El trabajo de la Comisión Preparatoria 1980

Del 4 de julio al 20 de agosto la CPAG-80 trabajó sin cesar sobre el material recibido de las provincias. El P. Sarasola en el Boletín de la CLAPVI (n. 21, p. 294-295) describe los pasos seguidos:

1. Síntesis de todas las observaciones por capítulos y artículos de las actuales Constituciones. Primer anteproyecto.
3. Análisis en común de este trabajo. Primera votación indicativa en algunos casos.
3. Análisis del trabajo por la Subcomisión Jurídica.
4. Nueva puesta en común. Votaciones parciales.
5. Votación definitiva del texto a proponer con sus alternativas.
6. Organización del «Instrumento de Trabajo» de la siguiente manera:
 - a) Texto actual de las Constituciones y Estatutos.
 - b) Clasificación en Constituciones o Estatutos.
 - c) Variaciones sugeridas al texto.
 - d) Textos nuevos propuestos por las provincias.
 - e) El «Schema Textus Propositum».
7. Elaboración del «Quaestionarium» para las respuestas.
8. Síntesis de las respuestas a las Propositiones y Preguntas de los Seis Estudios por temas y por provincias según el orden del catálogo.
9. Envío del Reglamento de la Asamblea General, revisado por el P. Rigazio a petición de la CPAG-80, a los Visitadores para sus observaciones.

10. Estudio de los preparativos prácticos para la Asamblea General. Sugerencias al Superior General y su Consejo.

11. Elaboración de cartas al Superior General para darle cuenta de los trabajos realizados, a los Visitadores y a las provincias.

12. Estudio de la publicación del «Instrumentum Laboris», la «Synthesis Responsionum» y el «Quaestionarium».

El resultado (Vinc. n. 5 y 6) de todo este trabajo está en las manos de los cohermanos que lo pueden juzgar por sí mismos. Creo que una cosa es clara y es el esfuerzo honesto de la Comisión Preparatoria de ser fiel a los datos y a las sugerencias de las provincias.

En la Síntesis, como se nota en la carta introductoria, faltan trozos interesantes de comentarios generales a los Estudios de la CPAG-80, pero resultaba imposible publicar todo el volumen de las respuestas.

Presente estadio

La fase en que nos encontramos es más fácil y da muchas posibilidades. Los documentos están impresos y son asequibles a todos los cohermanos con una anticipación discreta, un tiempo suficiente, pero no excesivo, para un trabajo metódico.

El texto en latín puede resultar antipático a muchos, pero no había otra alternativa para hacerlo llegar en breve tiempo a todos los cohermanos; por otra parte es bastante simple para que lo puedan leer con facilidad todos los iniciados en latín.

El Superior General en su carta de 12 de octubre de 1978 hace una viva exhortación a su estudio, para que la Asamblea General pueda representar un verdadero consenso comunitario y al mismo tiempo preparar el compromiso de llevarlas a la práctica.

Algunos Visitadores han comprendido, ya en el estadio anterior, que el estudio de los documentos de la Comisión Preparatoria era una gran ocasión para mentalizar a toda su provincia con los problemas de toda la Congregación. Esta ocasión es mejor todavía. Si se logra interesar a todos los miembros de las provincias en el estudio de los proyectos, se pueden conseguir dos efectos importantes: aportar algo vivo a la Asamblea General y preparar el *compromiso comunitario* de llevarlas a la práctica después de la Asamblea. Los que hayan participado en la elaboración de las Constituciones, sabrán leerlas después con interés.

Es de notar que el punto culminante de la Asamblea General no es precisamente la elaboración de un texto perfecto de

Constituciones, sino la voluntad decidida de ponerlas en práctica. Creo que la Asamblea misma haría bien en estudiar los medios de difusión y comunicación a los cohermanos de los resultados y hacer un programa de puntos a implementar tanto a nivel provincial como local. Muchos provinciales han hecho experiencias de reuniones de superiores locales, otros han hecho reuniones regionales con la participación de todos los cohermanos en ellas. Se podrían confrontar las dos experiencias y proponer alternativas para el tiempo después de las Asambleas.

Sugerencias metodólicas

El método fundamental para estudiar estos documentos (Vinc. n. 5 y 6) está contenido en las cartas introductorias. Es lo primero que hay que leer con toda atención, y aún las provincias harían bien en traducirlas a la propia lengua para que no haya ninguna duda de su contenido.

Para llenar el *cuestionario* se podría usar un método sencillo de lecturas sucesivas:

Primera lectura. En una primera lectura rápida se podría responder casi al 50% de los artículos, aquellos de los cuales no se duda. Hay muchos artículos sencillos, los mismos que en las Constituciones anteriores o con ligeros retoques de terminología, que no presentan ningún problema.

Segunda lectura. Una segunda lectura más reposada podría permitir hacer muchas opciones en artículos sin grandes complicaciones, que pueden ser de una manera o de otra, pero sin gran importancia en el conjunto.

Tercera lectura. Quedarían para una tercera lectura y para las discusiones comunitarias un grupo muy limitado de artículos: los primeros capítulos, las cuestiones técnicas sobre los votos y su conexión con la incorporación definitiva, etc.

Este sistema favorece una interiorización gradual de todo el proyecto y las cuestiones importantes van tomando relieve.

Las Asambleas Provinciales podrían seguir un método parecido. Después de la tabulación de las Asambleas Domésticas se puede percibir el grado de consenso dentro de la provincia. Donde hay consenso se podría eliminar en bloque tal vez con una sola votación para hacerlo propio de la Asamblea.

La discusión en este caso se puede centrar en los puntos de discrepancia y en los puntos importantes, que la comisión preparatoria provincial puede seleccionar para tener una idea más clara y para que los delegados a la Asamblea General se puedan interiorizar con los motivos que hay en el fondo de las opciones provinciales.

III. Puntos controvertidos

Es una aventura hacer una lista de puntos controvertidos. Los que aquí se enumeran van a modo de ejemplos. No es mi intención suscitar una nueva controversia, que no es deseable de ninguna manera, sino enumerar algunas cuestiones difíciles y apuntar a una posible solución tal como yo lo veo personalmente.

El fin de la Congregación. La Congregación acepta el lema de San Vicente «Evangelizare pauperibus». No podría hacer de otra manera, si se leen los textos de San Vicente con honestidad y en el momento presente de la Iglesia, en que se define a sí misma como la «Iglesia de los pobres». Esto está claro en el Artículo 1 y en el Art. 2 en que se copia al pie de la letra el texto esencial de San Vicente en las Reglas Comunes, sin embargo en las aplicaciones a lo largo de los capítulos hay una serie de expresiones que lo atenúan y lo hacen ambiguo.

La simple substitución de «pobres» por «hombres» (aa. 14, 15, 21 § 2, 40, 42, 61) diluye el fin y destruye su carácter específico.

En otros artículos (7, 21 § 1, 51, 54, 55) se habla de fin «preeminente», lo cual reduce el carácter normativo del fin: la evangelización de los pobres.

En el artículo 23 se habla de las «necesidades urgentes de la Iglesia». Esta fórmula, subordinada al fin, es completamente válida, pero como fórmula absoluta, con tendencia a convertirse en primaria, resulta ambigua, y puede dar lugar a evasiones.

La Asamblea de 1974 registra un progreso en este punto. La substitución de «pobres» por «hombres» ha desaparecido y la «evangelización de los pobres» domina todas las Declaraciones, aun cuando se retiene la expresión «fin preeminente» y las «necesidades urgentes de la Iglesia».

La distinción entre fin y ministerios dan una flexibilidad suficiente a las provincias para la selección de sus ministerios, particularmente si la fórmula «evangelización de los pobres» se deja sin ningún calificativo ni determinativo.

Creo que se puede constatar en todas las provincias un movimiento cada vez más pronunciado hacia la aceptación de la interpretación de los «pobres» en el sentido «económico-social». La reflexión sobre el artículo de San Vicente (R.C., I, 1) lleva dinámicamente a este resultado. Por otra parte sería escandaloso que los hijos de San Vicente se pusieran fuera de esta línea, cuando todas las instituciones en la Iglesia intentan ponerse dentro.

¿Fin único o múltiple? San Vicente estableció tres fines: «1. *Propriae perfectioni studere*; 2. *Evangelizare pauperibus, maxime rusticis*; 3. *Ecclesiasticos adiuuare*». Parece que hay que descartar la perfección propia por ser un fin genérico y un presupuesto de toda la vida cristiana. Queda el problema de retener los otros dos en el mismo nivel o quedarnos solo con la «evangelización de los pobres».

Esta cuestión no me parece aguda, ya que no se trata de excluir nada, sino de darle más o menos relieve en la formulación. La solución actual de mencionar la ayuda al clero en el mismo artículo primero al lado mismo del fin es una manera de ponerlo en relieve. Y no podía ser de otra manera dada la insistencia de San Vicente y el peso de nuestra historia y de nuestra actualidad en este ministerio.

Centralidad de la Evangelización. Evangelización es la palabra que mejor define nuestra actividad apostólica dentro de la Iglesia. Las Declaraciones resultan ambiguas en este punto y dan la impresión de poner la acción social en primer lugar. De todas maneras hay que hacer explícito todo el contenido del concepto de evangelización con todos los aspectos integrantes y complementarios, que entran de una manera particular en la línea vicenciana, para que no quede duda en este punto.

Hoy creo que van perdiendo fuerza las dicotomías de los años pasados, que oponían la evangelización a la sacramentalización y a la promoción humana. La Iglesia ha integrado la promoción humana en el concepto de evangelización como parte integrante. Y es también claro que el proceso de evangelización culmina en los sacramentos.

Los votos. En 1969 se planteó la cuestión de votos o no votos. Después se vio claro que esta no era la cuestión.

Hoy lo que importa es mantener la institución de nuestros votos tal como San Vicente los quiso para nosotros: compromisos personales con el evangelio y creadores de un ambiente evangélico entre nosotros en función de la estabilidad para la evangelización de los pobres.

La definición jurídica de los mismos es cosa de expertos el buscarla. En tiempo de San Vicente nuestros votos se llamaban «simples», más tarde hemos tenido que llamarlos «privados» para conservar la verdadera intención del Fundador. A lo mejor en la actualidad tendremos que tomar alguna decisión para salvar nuestra verdadera estructura.

Lo mismo puede decirse de la conexión entre los votos y la incorporación definitiva a la Congregación. Si esta conexión implica la publicidad de los votos, entonces la alternativa es clara para nosotros, hay que evitarla.

La definición del cuarto voto muestra los mismos problemas que la definición del fin de la Congregación. Clarificado el fin, basta aplicar la misma solución al cuarto voto.

La vida comunitaria. La manera de concebir la vida comunitaria puede ser otro punto discutido en la Asamblea. Creo que la línea ideal es el trabajo comunitario en equipo. Habrá que hacer una evaluación sincera del trabajo de los que viven solitarios y hacer una opción conveniente. Sería un error torcer la ley para resolver unos casos, que después se multiplican al amparo de la ley. Es preferible tolerar un caso irregular en una provincia que hacer una ley que los multiplique. La experiencia va diciéndonos que la dispersión impide la movilidad y reduce casi a cero la disponibilidad para los ministerios comunitarios.

Cuestiones jurídicas. Un grupo humano, si aspira a permanecer, aunque se presume carismático, necesita una regulación jurídica, de lo contrario está en peligro permanente de desintegrarse, ya sea por desacuerdo en la interpretación de los objetivos, ya por desacuerdo en los medios, cuando falta un instrumento regulador, o sencillamente cuando desaparece el entusiasmo inicial.

El instrumento jurídico debe tener lo necesario para que el grupo pueda funcionar, y para que, en caso de conflicto, cuando la buena voluntad de las partes no basta, haya una norma en medio, aceptada por todos, para resolverlo. El instrumento jurídico puede ser más o menos extenso. En primer lugar debe regular lo esencial, sin lo cual el grupo no existe. Hay otro campo de normas funcionales que estimulan al grupo a la acción, también debe llegar a este nivel. Si la norma deja de ser funcional hay que eliminarla. Creo que las normas esenciales deben pasar a las Constituciones y las que se consideren accidentales dejarlas en los Estatutos.

Con este problema viene hasta cierto punto ligado el de la descentralización. Doce años de experiencia permiten ya una evaluación sincera para poner la descentralización en el punto justo. Los nombramientos de los visitadores, los periodos asignados a la duración de los oficios, los reglamentos de las Asambleas Provinciales, las normas provinciales en muchos puntos concretos, los programas de formación tienen una variedad tal que corremos el riesgo de no reconocernos unos a otros.

No soy partidario de reducirlo todo a la uniformidad, pero sí de crear un denominador común que en el futuro nos dé la posibilidad de usar el mismo lenguaje y de ser capaces de trabajar juntos.

Mi experiencia de la Curia Generalicia me ha puesto en situación de descubrir un amplio estrato de formación sacerdotal

y vicenciana común a todos los vicentinos de todo el mundo, al menos por lo que se refiere a las generaciones anteriores al Concilio Vaticano II. Dudo que en el futuro suceda lo mismo dada la variedad de sistemas que marcarán a las generaciones futuras. Este juicio no es un juicio de valor sobre los sistemas, sino una simple comparación en un punto concreto.

IV. Cuestiones de forma

Las cuestiones de forma son accidentales y, en gran parte, dependen de gustos personales, sin embargo me parece útil suscitar algunos problemas en esta dirección.

Las Reglas Comunes tienen muchas virtudes: su estilo directo, sus aplicaciones concretas en que llegan a los problemas del mundillo comunitario, su claridad, su esilo denso donde todos los párrafos y todas las partes de los párrafos resultan significativos.

Es imposible recuperar todos estos elementos, pero al menos merece la pena hacer un esfuerzo para acercarnos.

1. Ante todo han de tener *claridad*, o sea que el sentido sea perceptible a primera vista a cualquier lector de la Congregación.

2. El *estilo directo* exige que lo principal sea afirmado en la sentencia principal y no venga dicho en una cláusula subordinada. Las Declaraciones tienen este defecto, en que no siempre lo principal ocupa el primer puesto sino que viene afirmado en cláusulas subordinadas con la consiguiente confusión y la impresión de poner el acento en lo que no es. Aquí se tropieza con el sistema de nuestras asambleas en que se procede por enmiendas y modos, y al fin resulta imposible enderezar el estilo sin hacer violencia a lo que la asamblea ha votado. Sin embargo si los redactores del proyecto llevan esta idea en su mente, resultará más fácil encajar las enmiendas y los modos en un texto originalmente correcto.

El tono concreto de San Vicente resulta inasequible para nosotros.

3. Las *citas del Evangelio o de San Vicente* no deben romper el texto como sucede en las Declaraciones con algunas citas de San Vicente sin conexión gramatical con el resto del artículo. El género literario de las Constituciones no es un artículo de revista, sino un texto legal que ha de ser traducido a muchas lenguas y necesita una verdadera conexión interna gramatical.

4. Dentro de las Constituciones hay *distintos estilos* que requieren distintos tratamientos:

a) Los artículos jurídicos, que establecen y definen los derechos y las obligaciones, tienen un estilo jurídico que no se puede olvidar.

b) Los capítulos sobre *el fin y el espíritu de la Congregación* tienen como sujeto la Congregación y los verbos en general van en presente, algunas veces atenuados por otro verbo «aspira», «intenta», porque resulta afirmar demasiado decir que la Congregación sigue a Cristo...

c) Los artículos del capítulo «De Vita Congregationis» deben de tener por sujeto: los cohermanos, los misioneros o simplemente nosotros. En este caso el verbo va en futuro imperativo. Cuando se trata de metas espirituales en la piedad habrá que atenuar los verbos con otros que indiquen aspiración.

5. ¿Párrafos largos o cortos? El Concilio usa párrafos largos, porque se trata de exposiciones doctrinales. San Vicente usa párrafos largos en las introducciones de los capítulos para exposiciones doctrinales, después los párrafos se hacen más cortos en general. Las actuales Constituciones usan solo los párrafos cortos, que son más fáciles de controlar. Se podría pensar en otro sistema pero resulta más difícil.

V. Continuidad y renovación

Las Constituciones han de estar en continuidad con la tradición. No se trata de fundar una nueva Congregación, sino de renovarla en continuidad con el espíritu del Fundador y de las «sanas tradiciones». En este sentido hay que hacer un esfuerzo honesto de fidelidad a nuestro pasado. Sin embargo hay que tener en cuenta que las Constituciones no pueden contener todo el espíritu de la Congregación. El espíritu es una tradición viva que configura nuestra vida y es imposible codificarlo adecuadamente. Las Constituciones pueden recoger y codificar unas líneas generales, pero si un grupo distinto del nuestro se pusiera a practicarlas, aun tomándolas al pie de la letra, daría un nuevo tipo de Congregación distinto del nuestro.

Yo veo aquí un problema en nuestra situación actual. ¿Hasta qué punto la continuidad de nuestra tradición está en peligro en este momento? Antes durante el tiempo de la formación había muchos elementos que lentamente configuraban nuestro modo de pensar: la lectura de la mesa, el manual de meditaciones en común, la lectura en común de San Vicente, de las circulares del Superior General, las repeticiones de oración y las conferencias semanales, todo ello en un ambiente sacro y casi sacro que lo hacía más eficaz. Después de la ordenación sacerdotal había que realizar un segundo aprendizaje ministerial con los mayores

que ya trabajaban en las obras y nos comunicaban vitalmente sus experiencias. Todo esto ha desaparecido. Ciertamente no todo tenía el mismo valor, había una buena cantidad de rutina e imposiciones indebidas que inhibía a unas personas y sofocaba iniciativas.

No podemos volver a los sistemas antiguos, sin embargo es necesario asegurar la formación vicenciana en la juventud y recuperar, en cuanto sea posible, los valores positivos de las épocas pasadas.

La formación en centros comunes con otros religiosos y diocesanos tiene muchas ventajas académicas y humanas, pero tiene el defecto de prestar menos atención a la formación vicenciana. ¿Qué medios se pueden arbitrar para poner remedio a este defecto que puede influir en nuestro futuro? Dejo la pregunta abierta...

Renovación

Las Constituciones por si mismas no renuevan la Congregación. La renovación es fruto de una conversión y de un compromiso colectivo de cumplirlas aunque sean imperfectas.

Lo que se puede y debe esperar de las Constituciones es que sean, no solo reguladoras de nuestra vida, sino estimulantes de una mística y de una acción colectiva.

Yo veo aquí un problema. Los motivos universales cristianos y vicencianos tienen el riesgo de ser formulados de una manera abstracta y dejarnos indiferentes. Los motivos concretos tienen otro riesgo de ser demasiado temporales y hacerse caducos en poco tiempo. ¿Cómo hacer una motivación realmente encarnada y permanente al mismo tiempo, que valga para hoy y para mañana?

Los fenómenos de la pobreza no son hoy exactamente los del tiempo de San Vicente y probablemente no serán los de mañana. Habrá que pensar en una motivación que haga un llamamiento fuerte a nuestra sensibilidad a los fenómenos de la pobreza, para percibirlos adecuadamente en el momento exacto y dar una respuesta a los mismos.

Deben hacer también un llamamiento fuerte a la creatividad. Es un aspecto que hemos olvidado con demasiada facilidad. San Vicente fue un ejemplo extraordinario de creatividad y nosotros nos hemos limitado a la rutina de seguir sus obras olvidando el verdadero espíritu que las producía.

Las puertas abiertas al futuro

Dados los cambios rápidos de nuestro tiempo, hay que pensar en el futuro. Y del futuro lo único previsible con seguridad es el

hecho del cambio mismo, pero el sentido de los cambios resulta un misterio. Esto lleva a la conclusión de reducir las Constituciones a los elementos esenciales y permanentes y no crear en ellas demasiadas estructuras que puedan impedir el progreso y la evolución. Para las estructuras contingentes están los Estatutos que se pueden revisar y actualizar periódicamente.

VI. Las Reglas Comunes

Son muchos los que insisten en la revalorización de las Reglas Comunes de una manera eficaz para que puedan configurar todavía nuestra vida. El problema no es fácil.

Es imposible declararlas obligatorias tal como están, y es también imposible rehacerlas para hacerlas obligatorias, para esto se hacen las Constituciones, que deben contener todo el espíritu de las Reglas Comunes sin sus prescripciones concretas. Se podría pensar en integrar en las Constituciones y Estatutos las normas concretas que se consideren válidas todavía, pero esta solución tiene la dificultad de sacarlas del contexto actual y hacerlas perder su verdadero sentido.

De todas maneras hay párrafos que podrían servir de introducción a algunos capítulos de las nuevas Constituciones o para ilustrar algunos artículos. Este estudio está por hacer, pero se podría hacer todavía sin mucha dificultad antes de 1980.

Otra solución sería declarar las Reglas Comunes como *Regla Básica* del Seminario Interno. El Director de Novicios podría hacer una exposición sistemática de las mismas, partiendo de los escritos de San Vicente y haciendo ver la continuidad en las Constituciones, la evolución de un momento al otro y la razón de la misma. De esta manera las generaciones nuevas podrán absorber toda la sabiduría vicenciana incluida en las Reglas Comunes.

DIRECTORY OF MUTUAL RELATIONS BETWEEN BISHOPS AND RELIGIOUS IN THE CHURCH

Cecil Parres, C.M.

Summarium

"Normae Directivae pro mutuis relationibus inter Episcopos et Religiosos in Ecclesia" simul a S. C. pro Religiosis et Institutis Saecularibus et a S. C. pro Episcopis procedunt. Hoc documentum non potest brevi enucleari compendio. Societatibus Vitae Communis applicatur. Hoc commentarium capere intendit documenti spiritum, qui valde consentaneus est traditioni vinentianae.

I. Elementa doctrinae. Prima pars agit de quibusdam principiis doctrinalibus de unitate interna Ecclesiae et de unitate missionis.

Christus ut caput est praesens in ministerio episcoporum in communione cum Romano Pontifice, quorum est regere ecclesias locales et praxim consiliorum evangelicorum moderare.

Instituta religiosa, autonomia interna praedita, proprium locum obtinent in Ecclesia secundum proprium charisma, naturam sacramentalem et missionem Ecclesiae participant, tam in favorem Ecclesiae universalis quam localis.

II. Ordinationes et normae. Secunda pars agit de normis practicis cooperationis inter episcopos et instituta religiosa, praecipue in actione pastoralis concordata et in promovendis vocationibus ad sacerdotium. Religiosi laborare debent in Ecclesia locali sub auctoritate Episcopi, salva semper natura instituti.

Omnes normae fluunt ex una eademque idea: Ecclesia est una, eiusque missio est una.

A Directory of some forty pages cannot be aptly and accurately summarized in a few pages. When the content of the directory attempts to explicitate such a broad thesis as the relations between the hierarchy of the Church and Religious Institutes and Societies of Common Life on the level of both doctrine and practical application, on the level of the Church both local and universal, it is even more defiant of facile summarization.

The Directory mentioned was issued jointly by the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes and the Sacred Congregation for Bishops under date of May 14, 1978. By intent of inclusion as well as by the nature of the relationship addressed, the document applies in its relational directives to Societies in the Church still known legally as of Common Life and does have a particular interest for and application to the Congregation of the Mission. It is to this interest and application that these remarks are directed, not so much by way of summary as by way of attempted appropriation of the spirit of the teaching and the directives to Vincentian mission and life in the Church and in relationship to the hierarchy. This, I believe, is an easier task, because I also believe the spirit of the document reflects a quite traditional Vincentian spirit and one with which Vincentian purpose, mission and life can be at home.

I. Doctrinal elements

The Church is the new people of God and forms one body in which all members are united and ordered to one communion and mission, all together constituting the visible Sacrament of

the Church, the universal sacrament of salvation. All members are signs and instruments of union with God and of the salvation of the world. All are called to holiness of life and to apostolate.

The organic communion of the Church is at once spiritual and hierarchical, having its origin and its vitality from Christ as head of the Church and from his Spirit. Christ as head is present in the ministry of Bishops, who in hierarchical union with the Roman Pontiff manifest and make effectively present the office of Christ as head in the Church. Bishops serve the community of the faithful in the threefold office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing as vicars of Christ. To Bishops, in union with the Roman Pontiff, belongs the office of discerning the various gifts and competencies, including religious charisms, in the Church, so that the people of God may live in the world as signs and instruments of salvation.

Religious Institutes and other Societies do participate in a special way in the sacramental nature of the Church. Each has its own vocation and mission in the Church as a gift of the Holy Spirit and as authentically approved by the Sacred Hierarchy. While the internal order of an institute requires a certain amount of autonomy of governance in relation to the life and mission of the institute, this does not amount to independence within the Church of the hierarchical authority of the Church.

There must exist also a proper concordance and an insertion of the mission proper to each institute within the Church under the headship of the Bishops. Institutes and members, conscious of the charism of the institute and of the gifts of individual members, will have at the same time an ecclesial consciousness which does not view the Church as something apart from themselves but views rather the institute and themselves as part of the Church and for the Church.

The mission of the people of God is one and is none other than the mission of Christ himself continued in history; so that the Church is by its very nature missionary.

The very nature of apostolic-missionary action calls all the faithful to a life of intimate union with God and to a life of prayer: bishops and with them priests according to their office and ministry in the Church, and members of institutes according to the nature of the life and mission of the institute. Union with God and prayer are themselves effective testimony to the mission of the Church, which seeks to bring all men through Christ to union with God.

The mission of the people of God is a universal mission, according to the very nature of the Church and the mandate of Christ. Particular and local Churches express this universality

of the Church among various peoples of the world, in various cultures and regions, and are in a real sense constitutive of the universality of the Church.

As Bishops united with the Holy Father must have an ecclesial consciousness which is both universal and particular, so the same consciousness, though present in all institutes, must find expression in a special way in exempt institutes. Such institutes mirror both the universality of the Church in special dependence on the Holy Father with prompt disposition to serve the needs of the Church universal, and the particularity of the local Church of which they are a part and in which they serve as pertaining to the diocesan family.

The concept of exemption thus denotes both a greater internal autonomy and a freer apostolic readiness for the needs of the universal Church: both the autonomy and the apostolic readiness being at the service of the whole church and in local Churches with obedient regard for and obedient cooperation in life and mission with both the Holy Father and the local Ordinary. Thus exemption should create and foster, according to the charism and nature of the institute, a special ecclesial consciousness which is at the service of the Church both universal and local.

The Congregation of the Mission should be at home with the Directory's concept and vision of renewed ecclesial consciousness of the missionary dimension of the Church at home and abroad. This should be true for the Congregation especially in the mission of the evangelization of those still today the most neglected and still the most loved by Christ — the poor in need of the message and the means of salvation which the Church must continue to announce to men and continue to be in the world; and it should be true in an especially related and even inseparable way for the Congregation in the mission of the formation of those whom Christ and his Church still need in the ordained ministry for the continuation of his mission — the clergy. It is to a special mission in the Church that the charismatic genuinity of the Congregation of the Mission is especially directed and should be directed today as from its beginnings in the Church both universal and local. If the mission of the Church is one and none other than the mission of Christ, the special mission of the Congregation is also one in and with the Church, open to the needs of the Church today in the continuation of the mission of Christ and able to adapt itself to those needs in various and changing times and cultures. For the Charism of an institute, especially of an apostolic-missionary institute, is authentically approved in the Church to pursue

the originality of its special ecclesial-social purpose for the Church and as sharing the ongoing mission of Christ in and through his Church.

II. Ordinations and norms

The second part of the Directory deals with some practical orientations, arrangements, and norms of cooperational relationships between Bishops and institutes. These can be read and studied not only in view of their implementation as directives and norms, but also for an understanding of vocation and mission in the context of the sacramental nature of the Church and its mission.

The important areas approached are the respective authority of Bishops and Superiors, mutual collaboration and coordination in the promotion and formation of vocations, and the ensemble of pastoral, apostolic, and missionary endeavor and activity.

On the part of institutes and members there must be an understanding of the exigencies of the pastoral mission of the local Church, of which the Bishop is the head. The manner of life proper to an institute and its members, as well as the apostolic works proper to an institute and its members, are to be respected and appreciated by the Bishops and the diocesan clergy. At the same time the local pastoral and apostolic needs may be such that an institute or its members are requested to undertake new kinds of activities in keeping with the spirit of the institute, to cooperate in diocesan pastoral and apostolic planning and endeavors, or to assume offices or positions of administration in the local Church. Put in proper perspective, the pastoral exigencies of the local Church and the manner of life and apostolate proper to an institute and its members should not be sources of conflict and division in the total life and mission of the local Church, of which the institute and its members are an actual part.

From the local Church, the Directory moves its orientation of directives and norms to other levels of ecclesial organization, life, and mission: national, regional, ritual, and universal. The strictly juridical lines, as well as the organizational means, receive from the doctrinal setting in which they are placed, and from which they flow, their meaning and force as practical ordinations of the sacramental and missionary understanding of the Church. All in all, the Directory presents a central theme and message for both hierarchy and institutes, for understanding and application: the Church is one and its mission is one.

THE POOR

An attempt to fathom the mind of St. Vincent

John W. Carven, C.M.

Summarium

I. Introductio. Adiectivum «pauper» lingua gallica aliam significationem habet ante nomen et aliam post nomen. Positum ante nomen non necessario connectitur cum paupertate oeconomica.

II. Propositum huius studii est investigare usum verbi «pauper» sive in documentis officialibus Congregationis, sive in scriptis Sancti Vincentii.

III. Coste a) In *documentis officialibus* verbum «pauper» adhibetur ut adiectivum, quod vario modo interpretari potest, in genere in sensu compassionis. Semel tantum ut nomen usurpatur.

b) In *Collationibus* Sanctus Vincentius pluries adhibet verbum «pauper» ut nomen, et etiam in multis occasionibus ut adiectivum ante nomen.

IV. Sensus biblicus verbi «pauper» non apparet ligatum cum paupertate oeconomica.

V. Conclusio. Liceat mihi paraphrasim adhibere Sancti Vincentii: noster finis est amplecti corda hominum, facere quod Filius Dei fecit, praedicare Evangelium pauperi populo, communi populo.

I. INTRODUCTION

While reading Louis Abelly's *La Vie De S. Vincent De Paul*,¹ I was struck by his use of the adjective *pauvre*. Abelly lived at St. Lazare during the later part of St. Vincent's life and was an eyewitness to the activity of St. Vincent. Since he was conversant with the usual use of spoken and written language of the age of St. Vincent, from an historian's point of view, his work has certain value for us, despite some understandable inaccuracies in his biography of St. Vincent.

In speaking of the beginnings of the Congregation of the Mission he says:

Ces sept étant ainsi assemblés et unis avec M. Vincent pour vivre et mourir dans la Congrégation de la Mission promirent à Dieu de s'appliquer toute leur vie à procurer le salut et la sanctification du *pauvre peuple des champs* en la même Congregation; ...²

The use of the adjective *pauvre* before the noun *peuple* caused me to pause since, in French, placing the adjective before the noun instead of after it often alters its meaning. Thus, the above quote from Abelly could allow for a translation different from simply poor, with its usual connotation of material or economic poor. The above quote could be rendered:

These seven [priests], thus being assembled and united with M. Vincent to live and die in the Congregation of the Mission, promised to God to apply themselves all their life in the same Congregation to procure the salvation and sanctification of the *wretched people of the country*; ...

Certain chapter headings in Abelly use the same juxtaposition of the adjective *pauvre*: *Pauvres petits enfants* (sorry little infants) and *Pauvres gentilshommes et demoiselles réfugiés à Paris* (needy gentlemen and gentlewomen [young lady (of noble birth)] who took refuge in Paris) – from the civil war in Lorraine.

A study of dictionaries provided inspiration to pursue this question further. *Cassell's French Dictionary*³ cites, in part, *pauvre* as follows:

pauvre: noun, masculine – poor person, pauper, beggar; (pl) the poor.

pauvre: adj. – poor, needy, indigent, wretched, sorry, etc.

Three examples given in this citation are illuminating:

c'est un pauvre poète – he is a wretched poet;

le pauvre homme! – the poor devil!

un homme pauvre – a poor man.

A similar example is found when looking up *petit* (e.g. *la petite Compagnie* or *petits enfants*):⁴

petit: adj. – little, small, unimportant, petty, trifling, mean, shabby, limited, humble, feeble.

un homme petit – a mean man;

un petit homme – a little man.

With regard to poor, an English Dictionary allows for variations in meaning:⁵

poor: 1a – lacking material possessions; b – of, relating to, or characterized by poverty. 2a – less than adequate; meager; b – small in worth; 3 – exciting pity; 4a – inferior in quality or value; b – humble, unpretentious; c – mean, petty.

Finally, an example from French secular history lends credence to the hypothesis that *pauvre*, placed before the noun, does not exclusively connote the poor in an economic or material sense. John L. Carr, in *Life in France under Louis XIV*,⁶ treats, in one section, of Louis and the Arts. It must be remembered that the Sun King (1638-1715) had a great influence on the stylization of the French language and set the fashion for many of the artists of his day. In his work, Carr details the personal relationship between Louis and the dramatist Molière, who gives us evidence of the special meaning of *pauvre* when used before a noun. In *Tartuffe* he uses the expression *pauvre homme*. It reflects an incident at Versailles when Louis XIV used this expression (*pauvre homme*, not *homme pauvre*) with regard to his dinner, during Lent, at the house of the Bishop of Péréfixe, hardly a destitute person.

II. PURPOSE

Spurred by Abelly's use of *pauvre*, I undertook a semantical study of Pierre Coste⁷ to investigate the use of *pauvre* in official documents of the Community and in a representative selection from the Conferences of St. Vincent. Although it is not an exhaustive research, it can be considered to be illustrative in attempting to fathom the mind of St. Vincent in the use of the word "poor." This study, then, is an attempt to present, as objectively as possible, material from documents dealing with the foundation of the Community and from Conferences of St. Vincent, principally those on the Rules, which he preached during 1658-1660. The reader will hopefully be able to frame an informed opinion based on official material, be able to appreciate the ordinary mode of speaking of St. Vincent as a possible indication of his understanding of "poor." Finally, this study is concluded with an amateurish presentation of a biblical understanding of poor and a statement of a possible interpretation of St. Vincent.

III. COSTE

A. *Official documents of the Congregation of the Mission (1625-1632)*

Of the documents relating to the foundation of the Community, the first document of importance is the contract entered into by St. Vincent and the De Gondi family.⁸ As stated in the contract, the De Gondis believed that the people in the cities,

notably Paris, were adequately ministered to spiritually, but that

...il ne reste que le *pauvre peuple* de la campagne, qui demeure comme abandonné. — there remains only the poor [wretched, sorry] people of the countryside, who alone continue as abandoned.

These suburban and/or rural inhabitants can be helped, according to the contract, by pious ecclesiastics who "completely and unconditionally apply themselves to the needy people (*pauvre peuple*), [priests] going from village to village... to preach, instruct, exhort and catechize these poor folk (*pauvres gens*)..."⁹ The De Gondis were interested in the "salvation of these wretched souls" (...du salut des *pauvres âmes*...), so much so that they stipulated in the contract that St. Vincent and his companions could preach "in the city only in case of notable necessity."¹⁰ Moreover, since De Gondi was General-of-the-Galleys, he stipulated that the first confrères "assist spiritually the wretched galley-slaves (*à assister spirituellement les pauvres forçats*)."¹¹

Subsequent to the contract between the De Gondis and St. Vincent, the Archbishop of Paris approved the Congregation of the Mission.¹² He stated that the missionaries

...qui s'emploient aux missions, à catéchiser, prêcher, et faire faire confessions générales au *pauvre peuple* des champs, ... — who are employed for missions, to catechize, preach and bring the wretched people of the country to make general confessions, ...¹³

Furthermore, the Archbishop stated that the missionaries not only should not work in the city, but also "that they should go only to places assigned by the Archbishop."¹⁴

With the approbation of the Archbishop of Paris in hand, King Louis XIII approved the Congregation of the Mission.¹⁵ Louis' approval manifested his awareness of the spiritual needs of the people living outside the cities in France:

...vers le *pauvre peuple*, ayant considéré pendant quelques années que les habitants des villes étaient assistés au spirituel par quantité de personnes de savoir et insigne piété, et que ledit *pauvre peuple* de la campagne demeurerait seul privé de cette consolation et assistance... s'appliqueront entièrement et purement à l'instruction spirituelle dudit *pauvre peuple*... catéchiser ces *pauvres gens* de village,... — towards wretched people, having considered for some years that the inhabitants of the cities were assisted spiritually by an abundance of persons of knowledge and distinguished

piety, and that the aforementioned needy (poor) people of the countryside live deprived of this consolation and assistance... will apply themselves entirely and unconditionally to the spiritual instruction of the said sorry (poor) people... to catechize the wretched (poor) folk of the village, ...¹⁶

In the same document Louis used the terminology "...de nosdits pauvres sujets (...to our aforementioned poor subjects).

Within the context of the developments of which the above documents give evidence, St. Vincent and his first companions drew up and signed an Act of Association.¹⁷ They agreed to:

...unissent ensemble pour s'employer, en manière de mission, à catéchiser, prêcher et faire faire confession générale au pauvre peuple des champs, ... - unite together to employ themselves, in the manner of a mission, to catechize, preach, and exhort the poor (needy, wretched) people of the country to make a general confession, ...¹⁸

Furthermore, they "...nous employer au salut dudit pauvre peuple des champs..." (to dedicate ourselves to the salvation of the said poor (sorry) people of the country).¹⁹

Finally, all these acts received the approbation of the Holy See in the Bull of Erection of Pope Urban VIII.²⁰ It stipulated that "the special and peculiar end of this congregation and its members be, with the favor of God, to lead to salvation those who dwell in farms, villages, lands, and more humble places and towns."²¹ The venue of the missionaries' work was to be "rusticorum" (of country places) and among "ignorantium instructioni" (ignorant of instruction).²² There is nothing in the Bull of Erection which appears to limit apostolic action to the economic poor only.

The Documents relating to the early Community further exemplify the thinking of the men of the time of St. Vincent. King Louis XIII wrote to Pope Urban VIII:

Le fruit et grande édification que reçoivent nos sujets de la campagne... par les prêtres de la Mission fondés pour aller de village en village prêcher, exhorter, confesser et catéchiser le pauvre peuple, ..., - The advantage and great edification which our subjects of the countryside... by the priests of the Mission established to go from village to village to preach, exhort, hear confessions and catechize the needy (wretched, poor) people, ...²³

Furthermore, the documents relating to the acquisition of the houses for the early confrères contain important information for understanding the idea of "poor." In the Act of Union of the Collège of Bons-Enfants to the Congregation of the Mission,²⁴ The Archbishop of Paris stated:

...tam ad catechisandos et informandos *rudium* animos, quam ad sublevandos *plebeiorum* per sacram exomologesim conscientias... — both to catechize and form the souls of the uncultivated (rude, unrefined, ignorant) and to raise the consciences of the people [opposite to nobles] through holy confession...²⁵

The contract of union of the Priory of St. Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission²⁶ stated that "the revenues of the said priory have been destined for the purpose of relieving and assisting corporally the wretched lepers (*pauvres lépreux*), and, lacking them, it would be more natural and conformable to the intention of the founders to apply the said revenues to help spiritually the needy people (*le pauvre peuple*) of the countryside, distant from the cities, infected with the leprosy of sin and in no way instructed in the mysteries of the faith necessary for salvation..."²⁷ In his approbation of the Community's acquisition of St. Lazare,²⁸ the Archbishop stated that the work of the Missioners was "to instruct more uncultivated men in Christian matters (...*rudiores homines in rebus christianis instituunt*) and to engage themselves completely by assiduous vigilance and indefatigable labors for the salvation of men, as yet of the rural areas" (...*assiduis vigiliis et indefessis laboribus se totos in hominum etiam rusticorum salutem impendunt*).²⁹ Later in the same year, another approbation by the Archbishop of Paris³⁰ contains the following phrases:

...ut non retardentur ab eorum onere et labore *percurrendi pagos*; — in order that they not be impeded from their work and labor of traveling through villages; ["through the villages of the diocese of Paris."]

...et ibi fidei mysteria doceant, confessiones, praecipue generales, audiant, *rudiores* in rebus christianis instituant, ... — and their teaching the mystery of faith, hearing confessions, especially general, instructing the *more ignorant* in Christian matters, ...³¹

As French law of the day demanded, Letter-patent registered with *Parlement* the transfer of the Priory of St. Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission.³² They stated:

...au dessein de convertir et appliquer le revenu tem-

porel dudit prieuré pour subvenir et assister spirituellement le pauvre peuple de la campagne, éloigné des villes et peu instruit des mystères de notre foi absolument nécessaires à salut. — for the purpose of converting and applying the temporal revenue of the said priory to aid and assist spiritually the needy people of the countryside, far from the cities and little instructed in the mysteries of our faith absolutely necessary for salvation.³³

And:

...conversion et salut des âmes de nos sujets résidant à la campagne... — conversion and salvation of the souls of our subjects residing in the countryside.³⁴

Various other documents of this period (1625-1632) give evidence of similar terminology. In Letters-patent of February 15, 1630³⁵ Louis stated that the early Confrères "...for the glory of God and spiritual solace of our subjects residing in the countryside (de nos sujets résidant en la campagne), ... would wish to give themselves entirely to the spiritual instruction of the said needy people" (dudit pauvre peuple).³⁶ In enregistering the Letters-patent of May 1627 and of February 15, 1630³⁷ *Parlement* stated that the Confrères worked "...for the practice of charity and the spiritual instruction of the people of the countryside (du peuple de la campagne).³⁸ Finally, the members of the Congregation of the Mission, sufficiently endowed by the De Gondis and the revenues from St. Lazare, could write: "having begged God to institute this small and poor Company" (cette petite et pauvre Compagnie).³⁹

In all these documents *pauvre* is used as an adjective and allows for various translations, but usually in a sense of pity — it appears. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that at least in one instance which I found, the Papal Brief on our Vows (August 12, 1659),⁴⁰ there is the phrase "...saluti pauperum rusticanorum applicandi..." (to be applied for the salvation of poor country-people).⁴¹

B. Conferences of St. Vincent

The Documents cover the legal written word, basically from a period of 1625-1632. As we all know, we speak differently than we write. With this in mind, it must be asked if St. Vincent used different terminology in his Conferences. If we examine his Conferences preached at the end of his life, do we find an evolution and refinement of his thought? Is the use of *pauvre* as an adjective altered? I examined the Conferences

preached in 1658-1659, Conferences dealing with the Rules of the Congregation, which he had recently distributed.

Prime Conferences to be investigated are those on the Observance of the Rules (May 17, 1658) and on the End of the Congregation of the Mission (December 6, 1658).⁴² In both Conferences *pauvre* is used as a *noun* in a number of instances. In the Conference on the Rules St. Vincent stated: "Notre-Seigneur vint et fut envoyé de son Père pour évangéliser les *pauvres*. Pauperibus evangelizare misit me. Pauperibus, aux *pauvres*!" (Our Lord came and was sent from His Father to evangelize the poor. To evangelize the poor He sent me. To the poor, to the poor).⁴³ Later in the same Conference he said: "...aux *pauvres* abandonnés" (to the abandoned poor).⁴⁴ In the Conference on the End of the Congregation St. Vincent stated: "Notre fin, c'est donc de travailler à notre perfection, à évangéliser les *pauvres* et à enseigner la science et les vertus propres aux ecclésiastiques." (Our End is thus to apply ourselves to our perfection, to bring the Gospel to the poor and to teach the expertness and virtue appropriate for ecclesiastics).⁴⁵ Later in the same Conference St. Vincent said:

La seconde chose que la règle marque que nous avons à faire, c'est d'instruire les peuples des champs; voilà où nous sommes appelés. Oui, Notre-Seigneur demande de nous que nous évangélisions les *pauvres*: voilà ce qu'il a fait et ce qu'il veut continuer de faire par nous. — The second thing which the Rule appoints us to do is to instruct the people of the country. Yes, Our Lord requires us to evangelize the poor: behold what He has done and what He wishes to continue to do through us.⁴⁶

However, in the same Conferences *pauvre* is also used as an adjective *before the noun*. In the Conference on the Rules St. Vincent related his response to the request of the Queen to give missions in Metz: "...les *pauvres* prêtres de la Mission ne sont que pour les *pauvres* gens de la campagne" (...the wretched priests of the Mission are only for the needy people of the countryside).⁴⁷ In the same Conference he spoke of the work with the foundlings: "...retirer les *pauvres* enfants trouvés" — to snatch back the *sorry* foundlings.⁴⁸ When speaking of the End of the Congregation, St. Vincent stated that "the purpose of the Company is to imitate Our Lord, autant que des *pauvres* et chétives personnes le peuvent faire" (as far as poor and puny persons can do it).⁴⁹ Again, in the same Conference, he told the Confrères:

...vous savez l'ignorance du *pauvre* peuple, qui est

presque incroyable, et savez aussi qu'il n'y a point de salut pour les personnes qui ignorent les vérités chrétiennes nécessaires... — you know the ignorance of the *wretched* people, which is almost unbelievable, and you know also that there is no salvation for people who do not know necessary Christian truths...⁵⁰

He continued: "But, God, seeing this necessity and the mishaps which, through the succession of time, have occurred through the negligence of pastors and the birth of heresies, which have caused a great diminution in the Church, has wished, in His great mercy, to remedy that by missionaries, sending them to put these *poor* folks (*ces pauvres gens*) in a state to be saved."⁵¹ Our mission, then, is "to assist the needy people (*le pauvre peuple*) in the way Our Lord Himself would assist them, if He were still on earth."⁵²

The Conferences on the Observance of the Rules and on the End of the Congregation of the Mission are of prime importance in fathoming the mind of St. Vincent, but they are not the only places in which he appealed to our End. Throughout 1658-1659 he explained our Rules to the Confrères at St. Lazare. In many of the Conferences he referred to our End, and in these Conferences he spoke of *pauvre peuple*. In the Conference on the Members of the Community⁵³ he reminded the Confrères that they must work "for the salvation of the people of the countryside" (...au salut des peuples de la campagne).⁵⁴ When St. Vincent spoke of Evangelical Maxims,⁵⁵ he first summarized the previous Conference on Chapter I of the Rules and again reminded the Confrères that our End was "...d'assister les pauvres gens des champs..." (to assist the wretched folk of the country) and "to go from village to village to evangelize the poor people, to direct the seminaries and conferences, and to devote oneself to the other works which the Company is accustomed to exercise toward the neighbor."⁵⁶ In speaking on the Five Fundamental Virtues,⁵⁷ he said: "Notre fin, c'est le pauvre peuple, gens grossiers" (Our end, it is the poor people, the common folk).⁵⁸ Finally, in his Conference on the Vows,⁵⁹ St. Vincent cited article 18 of Chapter II of our Rules:

...et cette petite Congrégation de la Mission ayant été suscitée en l'Eglise pour s'employer au salut des âmes, principalement du pauvre peuple des champs... — and this feeble Congregation of the Mission, having been raised up in the Church to be used for the salvation of souls, *principally* of the needy people of the country...⁶⁰

In the Conferences already cited and in other Conferences and Repetitions of Prayer of this period are found other instances where *pauvre* is used as an adjective before the noun in an apparently non-economic sense. Referring to the foundation of the Church, he said: "In establishing the Church did He not choose poor folk who were ignorant and simple?" (*pauvres gens ignorants et rustiques*).⁶¹ In another place, talking about the universal Church, he said: "...and which delivers this poor Church (*pauvre Eglise*) from this pitiable state..."⁶² He empathized with the wretched wounded soldiers (*pauvres soldats blessés*).⁶³ In a Conference On Mortification,⁶⁴ St. Vincent related his relationship with his parents and brothers and sisters and his desire for a benefice in order to support and advance them: "c'était le poids continuel de mon pauvre esprit" (it was a continual burden for my poor spirit).⁶⁵ When speaking of True Wisdom and Illusions,⁶⁶ he used the phrases "la pauvre nature" (sorry character)⁶⁷ and "une pauvre âme" (a poor soul)⁶⁸ attacked by the wiles of the devil. In a Conference on Poverty,⁶⁹ St. Vincent mentioned the heresy of Millenarianism in the early Church and exclaimed: "Sorry, people!" (*Pauvres gens!*), if they had studied well, ...⁷⁰ Preaching at another time on Poverty,⁷¹ he stated: "...j'excepte toujours les malades, oh! *pauvres malades!*" (I exclude always the sick, oh! the sorry sick!).⁷²

Any attempt to fathom the mind of St. Vincent in his use of *pauvre* would not be complete without citing his use of the term with regard to himself and others who were close to himself. Despite the various benefactions and foundations which supported the Community, he could refer to "cette pauvre Compagnie" (This wretched Company)⁷³ which was "made up of poor folk" (*composée de pauvres gens*).⁷⁴ He called M. Portail "poor" (*le pauvre M. Portail*)⁷⁵ and talked about "our poor coadjutor brothers" (*nos pauvres frères coadjuteurs*).⁷⁶ He considered himself "a sorry ignoramus" (*un pauvre ignorant*)⁷⁷ and "a wretched swineherd, only a villain" (*...je ne suis qu'un pauvre porcher, qu'un vilain*).⁷⁸ Can one overlook his hyperbole in speaking of his first benefactress, Madame De Gondi: "la pauvre feu Madame la Générale des Galères (the poor late Madame General of the Galleys)."⁷⁹

To this point I have detailed the use of the adjective *pauvre* before nouns and its consequent special meaning. Of its use after a noun, where it clearly means economically poor, I found only one instance in my consultation of Vol. XII and XIII of Coste: "Oh! bienheureux serions-nous alors de ressembler davantage à Notre-Seigneur pauvre" (Oh! happy will we be then to resemble more Our poor Lord).⁸⁰ It appeared in a Confer-

ence on Poverty where St. Vincent spoke of Our Lord having no where to lay His head and His being dependent on others for His daily needs.

IV. BIBLICAL

In the Conferences investigated for this study, St. Vincent informed us that "the purpose of the Company is to imitate Our Lord, as far as poor and puny persons can do it"⁸¹ and that we are "to apply ourselves as the instruments by which the Son of God continues to do from heaven what He did on earth."⁸² St. Vincent summarized this mission in the motto: *Evangelizare pauperibus misit me*. In their response to the C.P.A.G.'s study on the End of the Congregation of the Mission the Visitors of the Central European Provinces requested that this motto be understood in a biblical sense.⁸³ While I am in no way a Scripture scholar, I would like to present, in an amateurish fashion, some ideas gleaned from minimal research on Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:17-19 on which our motto is based.

In the *New American Bible*⁸⁴ Isaiah 61:1-2 is translated:

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the *lowly*..."⁸⁵

In Luke 4:17-19 Our Lord paraphrased Isaiah:

When the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed him, he unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore, he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the *poor*, ..." ⁸⁶

How do some scholars commentate on these passages? E. Powers states that the *lowly* of Isaiah should be understood as the "afflicted."⁸⁷ John L. McKenzie maintains that the afflicted "consists in membership in a lower class which is indigent and subjected to oppression with no power to defend itself."⁸⁸ He stated that Our Lord used Isaiah to announce the messianic character of His mission and, in the face of the haughtiness of the Pharisees, to announce that no one is to be excluded from His kingdom, not even the *lowly*, the *poor*.⁸⁹ A. Jones equated the poor (Matt. 11:5) with the simple and docile.⁹⁰ In commenting on the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3) he stated that the poor in

biblical language indicates all in adversity (rich and poor) who humbly turn to God.⁹¹ A footnote in the New American Bible speaks of the poor, *anawim*, those who lack material goods and stand in need of the spiritual blessings promised by God.⁹²

Can, therefore, poor in the biblical sense be understood as the simple and docile, economically poor or not, who are in need of the spiritual blessings promised by God and who, if the Gospel were zealously preached to them when they appear to be abandoned, can be inspired to humbly turn to God?

V. SUMMARY

St. Vincent has stated that "you know the ignorance of the poor (wretched) people which is almost unbelievable, and you also know that there is no salvation for people who do not know necessary Christian truths." God, in His Providence, "seeing this necessity and the mishaps, which through the succession of time have occurred through the negligence of pastors and the birth of heresies, which have caused a great diminution in the Church, has wished, in His great mercy, to remedy that by missionaries, sending them to put these needy people in a state to be saved,"⁹³ especially to those who did not benefit from the zeal of priests of knowledge and known piety, those who lived outside the cities in France. It was to them, St. Vincent said, that "our vocation is thus to go, not in one parish nor only in one diocese, but through all the land... to embrace the hearts of men, to do what the Son of God did,"⁹⁴ that "we apply ourselves as the instruments by which the Son of God continues to do from heaven what He did on earth."⁹⁵ It was in this vein, as Abelly said, that the "charity of M. Vincent was not limited to any particular works, but was extended universally to all where he saw that God could be glorified," — that "since the spiritual needs were ordinarily greater in the villages and rural places than in the cities,"⁹⁶ St. Vincent initially undertook that venue, later to extend the scope of his zeal to seminaries, foreign missions, hospital chaplaincies, military chaplaincies — to whatever works authority, such as the Archbishop of Paris, requested. God, he said, "has given us [these works], either through those in which power resides or by pure necessity, which are the ways by which God has engaged us to these designs... because it is seen that [the Company] rushes to the most pressing and most forsaken necessities."⁹⁷

If I may paraphrase St. Vincent, our End is to embrace the hearts of men, to do what the Son of God did, to preach the Gospel to needy people, the common folk (Gens grossiers).

¹ LOUIS ABELLY, *La Vie de S. Vincent De Paul*. New Complete Edition (Paris, Gaume et C^{le}, 1891). 3 Vols. Original was published in 1664.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 132. All translations are mine. For emphasis I have underlined certain phrases.

³ *The New Cassell's French Dictionary* (New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1962), p. 548, col. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 558, col. 1.

⁵ *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass., G. & C. Merriam Co., 1975), p. 894.

⁶ JOHN LAURENCE CARR, *Life in France under Louis XIV* (New York, Capricorn Books, 1974), p. 94.

⁷ PIERRE COSTE, *Saint Vincent De Paul, Correspondance, Entretiens, Documents*. 14 Vols (Paris, Lecoivre, J. Gabalda, 1924).

⁸ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 59 - "Contract of Foundation of the Congregation of the Mission" (April 17, 1625), pp. 197-202.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

¹² COSTE, Vol. XIII, 60 - "Act by which the Archbishop of Paris approved the Congregation of the Mission" (April 24, 1626), pp. 202-203.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 62 - "Letters Patent by which the King approved the Congregation of the Mission" (May, 1627), pp. 206-208.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

¹⁷ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 61 - "Act of Association of the first Missioners" (September 4, 1626), pp. 203-205.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 81 - "Bull of Erection of the Congregation of the Mission" (January 12, 1632), pp. 257-267.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 262.

²³ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 68 - "Letter of King Louis XIII to Pope Urban VIII" (June 24, 1628), p. 219.

²⁴ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 63 - "Act of Union of the College of the Bons-Enfants to the Congregation of the Mission" (June 8, 1627), pp. 208-213.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

²⁶ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 77 - "Contract of union of the Priory of St. Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission" (January 7, 1632), pp. 234-244.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

²⁸ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 79 - "Approbation by the Archbishop of Paris for the union of St. Lazare to the Mission" (January 8, 1632), pp. 248-254.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 249-250.

³⁰ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 83 – “Approbation by the Archbishop of Paris for the Union of St. Lazare to the Mission” (December 31, 1632), pp. 271-277.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 274.

³² COSTE, Vol. XIII, 1) 80 – “Letters-patent to confirm the union of St. Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission” (January 1632), pp. 254-257; 2) 84 – “Letters-patent to confirm the union of St. Lazare to the Mission” (January 1633), pp. 277-279.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

³⁵ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 74 – “Letters-patent to enjoin Parlement to Confirm the Letters of May 1627” (February 15, 1630), pp. 225-227.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

³⁷ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 76 – “Registration by Parlement of the Letters-patent of May 1627 and of February 15, 1630” (April 4, 1631), pp. 232-233.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

³⁹ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 89 – “Process-verbal of the Acts of Assembly held at St. Lazare in October 1642”, pp. 287-298.

⁴⁰ COSTE, Vol. XIII, 120 – “Brief on the Vow of Poverty emitted in the Congregation of the Mission” – Pope Alexander VII (August 12, 1659), pp. 406-409.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 406.

⁴² COSTE, Vol. XII, 1) 180 – “Conference of May 17, 1658: On Observance of the Rules,” pp. 1-14; 2) 195 – “Conference of December 6, 1658: On the End of the Congregation of the Mission” (Reg. Comm., Chapt. I, art. 1), pp. 73-94.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵³ COSTE, Vol. XII, 196 – “Conference of December 13, 1658 – On the Members of the Congregation of the Mission and their work” (Reg. Comm. Chapt. I, art. 2 & 3), pp. 94-114.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁵⁵ COSTE, Vol. XII, 197 – “Conference of February 14, 1569 – On Evangelical Maximes” (Reg. Comm. Chapt. II, art. 1), pp. 114-129.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

⁵⁷ COSTE, Vol. XII, 211 – “Conference of August 22, 1659 – On the Five Fundamental Virtues” (Reg. Comm. Chapt. II, art. 14), pp. 298-311.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

⁵⁹ COSTE, Vol. XII, 216 – “Conference of [November 7, 1659] – On the Vows” (Reg. Comm. Chapt. II, art. 18), pp. 365-377.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

⁶¹ COSTE, Vol. XII, 181 – Repetition of Prayer [May 1658] – On the Works of the Ordinands, p. 18.

- ⁶² "Conference on Rules", *op. cit.*, p. 85.
- ⁶³ COSTE, Vol. XII, 186 – Repetition of Prayer on August 4, 1658, p. 39.
- ⁶⁴ COSTE, Vol. XII, 204 – "Conference on May 2, 1659 – On Mortification (Reg. Comm. Chapt. II, arts. 8 & 9), pp. 211-227.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 219.
- ⁶⁶ COSTE, Vol. XII, 214 – "Conference of October 17, 1659 – On True Wisdom and Illusions (Reg. Comm. Chapt. II, art. 16), pp. 340-355.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 342.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 352.
- ⁶⁹ COSTE, Vol. XII, 218 – "Conference of [November 21, 1659] – On Poverty (Reg. Comm. Chapt. III, arts. 3-10), pp. 386-398.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 390.
- ⁷¹ COSTE, Vol. XII, 220 – "Conference of [December 5, 1659] – On Poverty", pp. 403-412.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 410. Nicholas Gobillon, the first biographer of St. Louise de Marillac (published in 1676), used "servantes des pauvres malades" as part of the subtitle of his work.
- ⁷³ COSTE, p. 379.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 203.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 101.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 391. Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* defines "Villain" as a "free common villager or village peasant" – no mention of economic condition, except feudal status.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 173.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 387.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 80.
- ⁸³ *Vincentiana*, 1978, 6, p. 476.
- ⁸⁴ *The New American Bible* (New York, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1971).
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 851, col. 2.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1138, col. 1.
- ⁸⁷ E. POWERS, S.J., "Isaiah", *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* (New York, Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1953), p. 571, 450, h-i.
- ⁸⁸ JOHN L. MCKENZIE, S.J., *Dictionary of the Bible* (Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Co., 1965), p. 682, col. 1.
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 684, col. 1.
- ⁹⁰ A. JONES, "Matthew", *A Catholic Commentary on the Scripture*, p. 871, col. 1.
- ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 861, col. 1.
- ⁹² *New American Bible*, p. 1074, footnote.
- ⁹³ COSTE, Vol. XII, pp. 80-81.
- ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 262.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 80.
- ⁹⁶ ABELLY, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-261.
- ⁹⁷ COSTE, Vol. XII, p. 90.

DE VITA CONGREGATIONIS

NOMBRAMIENTOS Y CONFIRMACIONES DE VISITADORES

Colombia, el 7 de agosto ha sido nombrado el *P. Abel Nieto* para suceder al *P. Alvaro Panqueva*.

Indonesia, el 6 de noviembre el *P. Ignatius Suharto* fue confirmado para un segundo trienio.

Argentina, el 20 de noviembre el *P. Alejandro Rigazio* fue confirmado como Visitador para suceder al *P. Ventura Sarasola*.

Salamanca, el 28 de noviembre el *P. José María López Maside* fue confirmado para un segundo trienio.

Roma, el 6 de enero de 1979 el *P. Alberto Vernaschi* ha sido nombrado Visitador para suceder al *P. Giorgio Miscia*.

Venezuela, el 15 de enero de 1979 el *P. José María López López* ha sido confirmado para otros dos años.

Etiopía, el 15 de enero de 1979 el *P. Will Bos* ha sido confirmado como Vicevisitador para suceder a Mons. Bomers.

Australia, el 17 de enero de 1979 el *P. Keith Turnbull* fue nombrado para un segundo trienio.

Rio de Janeiro, el 2 de febrero fue elegido y confirmado el *P. Alfeu Ferreira* para suceder al *P. Elías Chaves*.

Chile, el 7 de febrero de 1979 el *P. Stanko Boljka*, de la provincia de Yugoslavia, ha sido nombrado Visitador de Chile para suceder al *P. Roberto Schwane*.

MADAGASCAR. Prémices Vincentiennes

Germain TATA est prêtre, le premier du clan des Rabakara, et le premier du Séminaire de l'Immaculée Conception à Farfangana. Le dimanche 9 juillet 1978 a vu la dernière page de ce long journal qu'est la montée au sacerdoce.

En 1962, Germain est entré au Petit Séminaire de Farfangana et, en 1970, au Grand Séminaire d'Antananarivo. En 1977, parce qu'il veut être prêtre selon le cœur de St. Vincent, il fait son noviciat à Fort-Dauphin, y prononce ses vœux et s'engage définitivement au service des Pauvres dans la Congrégation de la

Mission le 6 janvier 1978. Enfin, au jour de l'Ascension, il reçoit des mains de Mgr. Zévaco le diaconat, en cette même ville où les premiers missionnaires envoyés par St. Vincent débarquèrent en 1648.

Seize années durant, le grain a germé, des larmes du semeur à la joie du moissonneur qui lie la première javelle pour l'offrir à Dieu.

Samedi 8 juillet, les pèlerins arrivent du Nord et du Midi. Car ce sera un pèlerinage, une marche et une démarche saintes de la grande communauté de foi. Nombreux sont les prêtres éducateurs de séminaire: Germain leur doit une part de ce qu'il est. Les religieuses viennent aussi, les trois nouvelles congrégations qui ont fait souche dans le diocèse et les Filles de la Charité dont l'affection bienfaisante a entouré Germain dans les années difficiles de son enfance.

Dimanche 9 juillet, 9 heures. Le peuple se presse sur l'esplanade de la cathédrale de Farafangana. Pieux ou curieux, c'est lui de toute manière qui donne son sens à la fête: Germain sera prêtre pour le peuple de Dieu, et ce peuple pèse de tout son poids d'espérance sur la célébration.

Message et Messagers, Janv. Févr. 1979

U.S.A. Meeting of the Five American Provincials

Place: West Hartford, Connecticut, October 9-10, 1978.

Agenda: Vincentian Conference

Convergence 1978

General Assembly of 1980

Our relationships with the Latin American Provinces

Groupe International d'Etudes Vincentiennes (GIEV)

Translation of the works of St. Vincent

Interprovincial cooperation

Convergence 1978

We discussed our experience of the joint meeting of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious held in Cleveland, Ohio August 27-31, 1978, whose theme was "Justice in the World." The meeting focused on the plight of the poor, especially in the Third World. It inspired us to a greater response to our own calling to serve the poor. We thought it would be good for all of us to have a greater appreciation of what the Church is doing for the poor in other parts of the world, and to have a greater sensitivity to oppression of the poor here at home. In

order to better meet the needs of the poor in our own provinces, we saw the need for flexibility in our own apostolic commitments. We lack flexibility if we are too tied into existing institutions which are not meeting the needs of the Church and have no power to change these institutions. In this situation we are not able to be creative. At certain points in history, it was the religious institutes that led the way in meeting current needs by being creative and innovative. In striving for this creativity, we should look first at the realities of the times facing us, and then see how we should meet these needs in the light of our history, rather than begin with our history. We should also keep in mind that all men and women are called to the experience of God, not just a privileged few. We considered ways of raising our level of consciousness of the plight of the poor in the world. We also spoke of the relationship of this to our own life styles.

(Extracts from the Conclusions)

INDONESIA. Mass-Media Communications in the Diocese of Surabaya

I. Most of the Vincentian fathers in the Diocese of Surabaya are in charge of parishes. But besides the pastoral works in the parishes the Diocese has some Committees that coordinate main activities for the whole Diocese e.g. Committee for Liturgy, Committee for Social economy, Committee for the youth, Committee for the catechetical centre, Committee for the Social Communication, etc. Some of the Vincentians are in charge of these Committees, for example: The Bishop gave me the responsibility for the catechetical centre and the Social Communication Committee of the Diocese of Surabaya (S.C.C.D.S.).

II. Diocese of Surabaya

- a) Sq. Km. 23.922.48; population: 17.755.123.
- b) Religion: majority moslem; 83.000 catholics.
- c) TV: one Government TV station in Surabaya.
- d) Radio: 23 Government Radio stations, and 28 private owned Radio stations.

II. 2. Catholic programmes

- a) *The S.C.C.D.S.* is responsible for all the catholic scripts in Radio, TV, Film and Press. Therefore all the requests for catholic programmes are directed to- and coordinated by this secretariate.

b) *Catholic programmes for TV*: these programmes have not yet begun in Surabaya, because nobody is yet trained for it. Therefore I am waiting until after my study in "Catholic Radio & TV training centre", Hatch End, London. Normally 15 minutes are given once a month for every religion.

c) *Catholic programmes for Radio*: Every Radio station has its own schedule for all religions recognized by the Indonesian Government. Normally 15 minutes is given once a week for every religion.

d) *Work system*: All the committees in the Diocese are coordinated in a team system. The team members work pro Deo; the team members of the S.C.C.D.S. — especially for script-writing — gather frequently for selection of subjects — programmings, music, etc. In all the parishes — where there are Radio stations — we have someone responsible for broadcasting the central programmes from the S.C.C.D.S.

e) *Scripts*: two kinds of scripts:

1) *Stencilled scripts*: we send these by post to the person responsible for one of the Radio stations in the parish. The texts of all these scripts must be received by the Radio stations three days before the broadcasting. It is requested by the Government.

2) *Stencilled and cassetted texts*: only if we are able to send them by special post service. All these cassetted texts must be sent back after broadcasting.

f) *Mini recording-studio*: On February 2nd 1978 we equipped a Mini recording-studio called "Sanggar bina tama". It is a room of 5×5 m², divided in two parts. One for the players, and the other part for the technicians. Here we produce scripts in cassettes mixed with background music. We have simple equipment and most of it is Japanese made, because we can repair and spare-parts are available in Surabaya.

II. 3. Main programmes of the R. TV. F. in Indonesia

a) Information for the social-economic prosperity: agriculture, home industries, public health, birth control, transmigration, etc.

b) Education: How to develop your own personality at school; and outside school, natural ability, Scouting movement, etc.

c) Recreative/culture/religious: local folk songs, local dance, art of painting, religious ceremonies, etc.

d) Business: advertisements of Supermarkets — of Building

contractors -- of catering equipment -- of electronic equipment -- of Photocopying equipment, etc.

Main purpose of these programmes must be:

- a) to develop the realization and living of the Pancasila (the five Principles of the Indonesian people's way of life);
- b) to make solid the national society and unity;
- c) to stimulate the creativity in the social life;
- d) to develop the awareness, the consciousness and the desire for the social and national building;
- e) to strengthen national stability.

In other words: to shape the attitude to life of the Indonesian people individually and collectively based on the Pancasila..

III. Finance

This is always the main problem in the mission, because the Diocese itself has not sufficient funds for these Committees. Therefore we have to try to be as self-supporting as possible.
July 5, 1978

John Tondowidjojo, C.M.

Inculturation of Religious Life in Indonesia

Hemos recibido un interesante documento de la Conferencia de Superiores Mayores Religiosos de Indonesia sobre «La Inculturación de la Vida Religiosa» en el país. Está articulado en dos partes: ideas generales sobre la inculturación y medios para conseguirla a todos los niveles. En la imposibilidad de publicarlo íntegramente, entresecamos algunos párrafos más significativos.

In the meeting of the Association of Major Superiors of Religious of Indonesia held at the Samadi Retreat House in Jakarta, September 6-14, 1978, we, the Superiors of Religious in Indonesia, experienced a process of conscientization concerning the importance of inculturation of the religious life we are following.

During this process of conscientization, several issues were frequently brought forward. We present here a synthesis of the more important points (issues) which we see as beneficial in our continuation and advancement of the process of inculturation which has already begun.

We are conscious that inculturation of Religious Life in our country is most important. Because the revelation of God has been brought to us through Christ, a response of faith according to our own particular situation is demanded. Here there is an interaction. In Christ, God became man so that man would share in divine life. This interaction must also take place between our Christian life and our culture, between the Christian religious life and the traditional religious values of Indonesia. Christian life must be lived in an Indonesian manner, as well as with the positive Indonesian values enriching Christian life. Living religious life should have an Indonesian color and Indonesian religious customs must be inspired by the Christian religious traditions. In all of these interactions, there is a continuous process of death and new life. There are human elements which experience restriction and death in order that the Christian person may be born. The same process also takes place in the inculturation of religious life.

Inculturation is a process which involves all sectors of life. Also, the Indonesian culture consists of a variety of expression. For this reason in the process of inculturation we must maintain the cultural values of each of our respective areas. Even so, there are also values which we have in common and are found in every corner of our nation. In our efforts to infuse the cultural and religious values of our people with the spirit of the Gospel, we must exercise wisdom. We must distinguish between values no longer meaningful and those which retain their meaning. This is true as the process of inculturation must give attention to the future. We must also be open to good influences coming to us from other countries. With regard to this point we wish to state that in this process of inculturation we appreciate the presence and cooperation of foreign missionaries who can give constructive criticism which enriches us. For the same reason it is very beneficial for a number of Indonesian Religious from one area to work in other areas of Indonesia. In this way an interaction takes place among the cultures of the different areas.

In our relationship with God we are aware that we must stress the contemplative aspect of religious life. We must have a sense of the mystery and presence of God in everything and especially in one another. We must give witness as men and women of prayer who are truly inspired by their Christian Faith.

We are very happy that during our Congress it became clear to us that in general we have already begun inculturation in several sectors, for example, in our life style as religious, the manner of exercising leadership, integration with the people

around us, religious motivation, liturgy, etc. We have used many means to stimulate the process of inculturation. We can be thankful that some people from other nations who have observed our situation here, have stated that the process of inculturation in Indonesia is well advanced thanks to the help of foreign missionaries.

PARIS. Carta del P. Sylvestre después de la visita (Extractos)

Roma, 14 de enero de 1979

Queridos amigos:

Desde fines de octubre a principios de diciembre he visitado las casas de la provincia en Francia. Antes, el año pasado y en el presente, había estado en las casas fuera de Francia. Así he podido ver a casi todos los cohermanos.

Hablé con cada uno de su vida, de su trabajo diario en la casa y en la obra a la cual está dedicado. Le pregunté sobre lo que pensaba de la Compañía y especialmente de la provincia, de su estado presente y de las perspectivas sobre el porvenir en personal y en obras...

Yo fui anotando todas las observaciones, y ahora he intentado ponerlas en orden para presentaros el resultado con algunos comentarios personales que me parece se imponen.

Esta carta no intenta daros gusto... sino devolveros ciertos rasgos actuales de la provincia, que miran al porvenir, para reflexionar sobre ellos.

La provincia existe

La provincia existe, porque hay una provincia de Paris y una conciencia de provincia que vive en el conjunto de los cohermanos por encima de las obras particulares y de las casas. Se manifiesta en la amistad que os une, en los diversos encuentros y en el interés que mostráis por todo lo que la concierne. Su futuro está condicionado por el envejecimiento general y por la dificultad de sostener las obras de las que estáis encargados, pero hay también un pequeño signo de esperanza en las vocaciones que renacen.

Algunos han suscitado la cuestión de la reunión de las dos provincias en una. Dentro de algunos años la cuestión será más aguda. En realidad ya existe la unión en la acción en muchos puntos extremadamente positivos: el Consejo Interprovincial, el Consejo de Misiones, la formación común y las reuniones comunes de pastoral...

El futuro está en los equipos comunes para realizaciones nuevas como el de Saint Astier, como muchos me lo han hecho notar.

Las vocaciones

La edad media de la provincia es de 60 años según el catálogo; según mis cálculos es de 65. Si contamos a los cohermanos del Vietnam ganamos un año.

En este momento cuatro jóvenes hacen su seminario interno bajo la dirección de los PP. Koch y Sens y otro estudia en Nancy. Están en el proceso de iniciarse en la espiritualidad de San Vicente y de la Compañía y en la vida de comunidad. He pasado unos días con ellos y me han hecho una impresión excelente. No hay que olvidar que están empezando y que las comunidades se deben mostrar acogedoras con estos jóvenes que van a ser la comunidad de mañana.

La preocupación por las vocaciones no ha de ser solamente asunto de algunos más dotados para los contactos con los jóvenes, debe ser una cuestión de todos...

Si preguntamos a los que han entrado recientemente por qué han entrado, nos dan dos razones: por lo que somos o la comunidad y por lo que hacemos.

Somos una comunidad

Los que se sienten llamados a darse al Señor en el sacerdocio o en el celibato consagrado, sin abrazar la vida contemplativa, pueden sentir la inclinación de ir al clero diocesano, que escasea cruelmente de vocaciones. Pero muchos dudan ante la incertidumbre actual sobre la función del sacerdote en una parroquia y, ante la perspectiva de cierto aislamiento, prefieren asegurarse el apoyo moral, espiritual y material de una comunidad.

Muchos de estos jóvenes han entrado porque han visto tal o cual comunidad. Muchos cohermanos me han hablado de su satisfacción y consuelo de pertenecer a una comunidad local y aprecian su calor y apoyo.

Yo he tenido el gusto de constatar que la mayor parte de las comunidades no se contentan con existir en el papel del catálogo, sino que viven realmente en comunidad y otras aspiran a ello.

Nuestro trabajo

Muchos de vosotros me habéis dicho que lo que puede hacer surgir las vocaciones es lo que hacemos, a condición de tener una orientación clara, precisamente en estos momentos de con-

fusión, cuando muchos se preguntan qué es el sacerdote y cuál es su misión en la sociedad.

No vendrán a nosotros simplemente para hacer lo que hace el clero diocesano, a no ser que la comunidad local ejerza una radiación extraordinaria o que sus miembros sean santos. Por regla general, para ser párroco o capellán de un movimiento y aun sacerdote obrero se hará sacerdote diocesano.

Yo no digo que no haga falta cambiar las parroquias y los movimientos de los que estamos encargados, como lo hacéis admirablemente muchos de vosotros entre los más activos, pero San Vicente quería algo más de nosotros, nos quería entre los más abandonados material y espiritualmente. Parece que la Iglesia actual ha tomado la reflexión del Hugonote de Montmirail y ha hecho de esta orientación de San Vicente una de sus mayores preocupaciones.

Me ha sorprendido que al menos quince de vosotros, sin contar los misioneros, me habéis dicho que debíamos retomar aquello para lo cual San Vicente fundó la Compañía, la evangelización directa, en las misiones lejanas, pero de una manera particular la misión interior itinerante.

¿No habrá aquí un signo, una llamada para volver a las fuentes, para inquietar nuestras certidumbres y nuestras instalaciones, así como nuestras dudas y nuestros escepticismos, para volver a lo que San Vicente quiso para nosotros, la evangelización itinerante, que está a punto de responder de nuevo a una necesidad creciente de la Iglesia en muchas diócesis donde los sacerdotes están disminuyendo rápidamente?

De hecho en la mayor parte de las provincias de la Compañía hay un resurgir espectacular de las misiones populares, una búsqueda de métodos nuevos y de soluciones originales.

Seguro que no es una solución milagrosa para el problema de las vocaciones..., pero, como decía San Vicente, «si hacemos los negocios de Dios, Dios hará los nuestros».

La misión exterior

La misión exterior es todavía la obra más importante de la provincia. 32 cohermanos trabajan en el extranjero, de ellos 26 en países no católicos. A este número hay que añadir todavía 25 cohermanos originarios de la provincia que trabajan en Madagascar, en el Oriente Medio, en Etiopía y en las Américas. Si ahora pensamos que hay en la provincia 35 antiguos misioneros, nos damos cuenta de su gran apertura, particularmente al tercer mundo. Esto debiera contribuir a nuestra expansión, pero tal vez por humildad no lo hacemos notar suficientemente.

André Sylvestre

IRELAND. «A Radical Re-orientation» to the Poor

We were asked by the Provincial to form the commission which the Provincial Assembly, January, 1978 requested: «to examine steps necessary to ensure community involvement with the poor, with a view to securing a radical re-orientation in this direction» (Provincial's letter to the Province, Feb. 22nd, 1978).

This request of the Assembly was appropriate since each member of the province has made a vow, namely: «I, N.N., will faithfully. dedicate myself to the evangelization of mankind, especially the poor, all my life in the congregation.» To evangelize the poor was the mission of Jesus himself and also the special apostolate which called our community into existence.

We have consulted a very wide variety of opinion to help us discover those who are most in need of human and spiritual help. Our enquiries have forced us to recognize that there are many ways of helping the poor, ways of which our Province knows little. Among those whose views we sought were two bishops, diocesan advisers, several priests with a wide variety of pastoral experience, confreres, religious, sociologists, workers, and people with experience of new developments in society, especially in the service of the poor. While we regard with great admiration the Province's ministry to the deaf our enquiries brought home to us how many needy people there are and what unsuspected opportunities exist for evangelizing them. (We are thinking here of the European scene and not of Nigeria.)

The circumstances of to-day and to-morrow

A) The real problem of the dechristianization of the poor has moved from the country to the city. Around Dublin for instance, large low-income housing estates are growing up and becoming more and more dechristianized. People in these areas are disheartened and confused. They have been moved in to a neighbourhood without facilities; they are strangers to each other, and they have neither the education nor the confidence to cope with the situation. Great social problems result.

The Christian solution which many recommended to us was community development, a process which would help people to make the transition to their new life, help them to organize themselves, and acquire a corresponding pride in themselves and in their locality. This is not "charity" as understood by the Victorians, but a way of helping people to help themselves by encouraging them, living close to them, identifying with them and being accepted by them. The priest is still trusted. He has

an entree to most houses and people like to see him around.

He is the natural leader for such developments, though his ultimate role is to train others to take the initiative and let them get on with it. Such work offers endless pastoral possibilities, but it requires that priests involved in it be properly trained.

B) In Dublin alone there will be an estimated thirty new post-primary schools by 1990, many of them catering for the sort of deprived areas described above. Experience shows that teams of priests, sisters and lay persons working together in these schools in pastoral care can achieve wonders. They are and they will be urgently needed. From several sources it came through to us that there can be greater opportunities for evangelization in education when priests/religious are not responsible for administration. Instead of claiming reserved places for ourselves it seems better to apply for positions on an ad hoc basis like lay teachers.

Involvement in schools appears to be one of the most realistic places to meet adolescents who are disaffected from organized religion, especially from the deprived areas we have been considering.

C) To the underprivileged, especially in the city, the priest has become a remote authoritarian figure. These people need to meet him as a person and when they do, experience shows that they will accept him as a natural leader.

D) There are many works for the deprived run by lay people where priests could co-operate, and would be welcome such as, work for the homeless, runaway children, prisoners, alcoholics, gamblers anonymous, the travelling people, care of the elderly and the mentally handicapped: there are also hostels for vagrants, abandoned and battered wives. People become involved in such activities for various reasons such as, the impulse of the Spirit, temperament and experience, perceived wants, etc. etc.

Responses

From those consulted the following approaches would seem to serve best the circumstances and the needs of to-day.

1. It was suggested to us to continue the fostering of vocations from different sources. This diversification of intake will influence the nature of our works in the future.

2. It is desirable to expose Vincentian students to human misery and deprivation as other communities are presently doing.

3. New areas of study and qualification must be found for our members to meet future needs and circumstances. Here we follow the example of various dioceses who have already qualified men in the specialized areas of community development, prison chaplaincies and other areas of pastoral care.

4. There should be a simplification of lifestyle to conform to our apostolates.

5. Our work should be concentrated in less affluent pastoral spheres.

6. a) The primary interest in education should be direct evangelization through pastoral and sacramental care.

b) Well run retreats for 2nd level students in suitable centres are religiously effective and badly needed.

c) There is a particular need for alternative forms of education for the socially deprived.

Recommendations to the Provincial and his Council

Out of the many possibilities open to us we wish to focus attention on the following as the most practicable.

Ireland: The Archbishop of Dublin is anxious to involve religious in parishes and schools in the developing areas. We should immediately train men for community development and ask to be given the pastoral charge of one such area within reasonable distance of Celbridge. A parish in this area would provide an outlet for the students in De Paul House, particularly at liturgical peak times, such as Easter, Christmas and on summer programmes.

We should ask for an area zoned for low income housing. Living in with the community would be several confreres involved in community schools in the area. It is important that we should have a presence in the place before people begin to move in.

England: London has many deprived areas where local clergy cannot cope with pastoral and educational needs. We should respond to the Bishops' desires by establishing three or four confreres in an ordinary house where they would get to know the local people. Some would take care of school children and their families. Others would care for the requirements of neglected people, for example, the large number of hostels for vagrants and other hopeless people.

Team Work: We were amazed at the number of people

consulted who said about these projects that the only effective method of pursuing them was by team work based on prayer and mutual and personal support.

Final Comments

The full-time involvement of a limited number of confreres in the above works should not exempt the rest of us from our obligations to work for the poor. We also point out the many possibilities for partial involvement of ourselves and of those with whom we work in direct evangelization of the poor.

We realize that no document can compel us to work more directly with the poor but we ask the question which each person can only answer for himself: is there in my life, as there was in St. Vincent's, any bias towards the poor?

Report of the Commission

Fathers Stan Brindley, Michael McCullagh, Aidan McGing and Michael Prior.

3rd January, 1979

NAPOLI. Convegno sulla Vita Apostolica (28-29 marzo 1978)

L'Assemblea Provinciale del luglio 1977, trattando fra gli altri argomenti quello della *Vita Apostolica*, lo aveva ritenuto particolarmente impegnativo e bisognoso di approfondimento: aveva perciò deciso che lo «studio sia continuato da una apposita commissione, nominata dal Provinciale col suo Consiglio, affinché nello spazio di un anno presenti un piano organico che determini i punti da vagliare in un convegno provinciale in vista di decisioni operative».

Il Convegno, svoltosi nella Casa di S. Nicola da Tolentino (Napoli) dal 28 al 29 marzo 1978, preparato da una Commissione riunitasi varie volte nei mesi precedenti, intendeva eseguire il mandato dell'Assemblea.

La partecipazione al Convegno era libera; di fatto sono stati rappresentati tutti i ministeri esistenti attualmente nella Provincia. Il lavoro si è svolto confrontandosi in vari *Gruppi di studio* sul *Documento-Base* preparato dalla Commissione. Non si è ritenuto di dover stendere un Verbale dettagliato delle varie opinioni emerse; e neppure un vero e proprio documento finale; ma sono state approvate alcune conclusioni:

1. L'ultima Assemblea Provinciale raccomanda alla Provincia che appaia più chiaramente l'orientamento del nostro apostolato.

Il Convegno, perché questo orientamento emerga più concretamente, ritiene che sia necessario ripetere periodicamente, a diversi livelli, l'esperienza di incontri e di comunicazioni reciproche, che si ritengono valide, a condizione che realizzino sempre meglio nel dialogo la conoscenza e l'apertura vicendevole.

2. Si ritiene di non dover porre in antagonismo esclusivo il lavoro delle *Missioni* e il lavoro *Parrocchiale*; ma di portare sull'uno e sull'altro una *revisione*, attraverso l'attenzione ai criteri vincenziani per le parrocchie (cfr. le "Norme Provinciali") e ai metodi più efficaci per le missioni.

3. Ammettiamo che nonostante gli appelli delle Assemblee Generali a un impegno comunitario nella ricerca dei nuovi poveri e forme di apostolato nuove, poco è stato fatto nella nostra Provincia in tal senso, e quel poco in forma individuale e frammentaria. Che quindi dobbiamo dare un apprezzamento più solidale con chi cerca di contribuire ad aprire nuove vie con settori sempre più lontani dalla Chiesa, collaborando a che sia superato l'aspetto individualista in forme più comunitarie, cioè più coordinate ad un «progetto provinciale».

4. *Clero*. Sono emersi due atteggiamenti: uno che fa delle proposte, l'altro che le vede troppo utopistiche.

Occorre valorizzare le iniziative attuali, con realismo e speranza che i Confratelli sappiano accogliere il Clero con carità e competenza.

5. Le proposte fatte dal Documento-base per il Convegno, e poi dal Gruppo di Studio, sulle *Figlie della Carità* e sulle Opere laicali, si devono ritenere accettate dal Convegno.

Queste conclusioni, approvate dal Convegno, naturalmente hanno un valore indicativo e orientativo per il Consiglio Provinciale e per il Consiglio Pastorale nella *programmazione*, che si sente sempre più urgente, ma nello stesso tempo sempre più impegnativa per tutti.

Ritiro dei Superiori (9-14 ottobre 1978)

Sei giorni è durato il *Ritiro dei Superiori*, nella Casa di S. Nicola da Tolentino (9-14 ottobre 1978); i primi giorni sono stati più specificamente dedicati agli Esercizi Spirituali; gli ultimi, pur senza interrompere il clima di raccoglimento dei giorni precedenti, sono stati dedicati a uno scambio di idee sul "*Progetto Provinciale*".

All'incontro partecipavano anche quattro Confratelli che compivano il 50° di vocazione (i PP. Leone, Capurso, Vassallo, Zenca); la circostanza ha creato un'atmosfera più favorevole a un risveglio spirituale e ad una fraternità più sentita.

I giorni dedicati al «Progetto» hanno avuto come punto di riferimento la lettera del Superiore Generale (25 genn. 1978): come essa dice, le Norme Provinciali non bastano; devono essere completate da un momento esecutivo che richiede necessariamente una programmazione partecipata a tutti i livelli.

Perciò alla creazione di un «Progetto Provinciale» — si è notato — non può bastare un incontro di pochi giorni, e neppure soltanto alcuni incontri. In tutte le sedi, e nelle varie occasioni, occorrerà confrontarsi nella sua elaborazione, affinché sia pure più probabile la sua esecuzione.

L'idea più importante emersa è stata quindi quella di chiedere che il Consiglio Provinciale e il Consiglio Pastorale presentino un avvio del Progetto, che poi sarà esaminato nelle case e negli organismi operativi della Provincia.

Perciò il prossimo appuntamento sul tema del «Progetto Provinciale» è un incontro del Consiglio Provinciale e del Consiglio Pastorale, che si terrà nel gennaio 1979.

Giuseppe Guerra

AUSTRALIA. Minutes of Meeting Asian — Oceania Visitors

Held at St. Vincent's Ashfield Australia June 30th — July 1st 1978

Present:

Very Rev. James Richardson, C.M. Superior General
Very Rev. Florian Kapusciak C.M. Assistant General
Very Rev. Keith Turnbull C.M. Province of Australia
Very Rev. Michael Kuzhiktattuchalil C.M. Province of India
Very Rev. Ignatius Suharto C.M. Province of Indonesia
Very Rev. Benjamin Ortazon C.M. Province of Philippines
Very Rev. John Hickey C.M. Province of Taiwan (Representative)

Agenda for the meeting.

1. Address of welcome — Fr. J. Richardson C.M.
2. Summary of the 1977 meeting in Houston — Fr. K. Turnbull C.M.
3. Review of each province by each Visitor.
4. Discussion of points made during review of the provinces.

5. Means of collaboration between provinces and exchange of personnel.
6. Integration of this meeting with wider English speaking conference.
7. Address by Fr. J. Richardson C.M.
8. Address by Fr. F. Kapusciak C.M.
9. Review of what provinces did following the general assemblies of 1968 – 1969 and 1974.
10. Matters pertaining to 1980 general assembly.
11. General Business
12. Future meeting.

After an opening prayer by Fr. Turnbull, Fr. Richardson addressed the group, pointing out it is the work of each province to perpetuate the Vincentian spirit and to enter into the work of the church. He and his assistants are willing to go out to the provinces to meet Visitors at regional meetings. He is interested in greater collaboration among the provinces. Already there are instances of such collaboration between Australia and India, Indonesia and The Philippines. Taiwan is studying how to have cooperation between the three provinces represented there, namely, Chinese, Dutch and American.

Fr. Turnbull gave a summary of the Houston (U.S.A.) meeting of English speaking provincials. Experience has shown such informal regional meetings to have great value, sometimes lost in a general assembly of all the provinces. Therefore an Asian-Oceania regional meeting was proposed by Fr. Turnbull and the Superior General agreed. The result of this meeting will be sent to the U.S.A. provincials with the idea that in the future it may be advisable to expand the English speaking meeting representation to include the Asia-Oceania region. First the Asia. Oceania region should be well established and the matter of joint meetings studied.

Then there were reports concerning the situation in each province represented concerning personnel, works and ministries and financial state, the social, political and religious atmosphere of each area was given. Fr. Richardson stressed the importance of showing concern for the poor in each area by seeking them out, contacting agencies of help for them. He urged all to be more attentive to this.

The discussion then focused on vocations, formation and on going formation. All areas reported having some candidates at various stages of formation. For philosophy, some sent their men to a secular college or a combined seminary in cooperation with other religious communities. For theology, use is made of a combined seminary or a community-run diocesan seminary.

General agreement was reached on the importance of our scholastics living in community with a director in charge to preserve community spirit and unity.

Fr. Richardson said concerning formation that the most important element is the man chosen for this work. He should have the support of the province, including acceptance by the confreres, and one who represents what is solid in the community. Good community life is what attracts young men. This good community life consists of 1) Good prayer life, 2) good community purpose, 3) contented confreres.

Fr. Kapusciak urged that the man or group selected for the work of formation should be retained for the job for some period of time, not changed frequently. Plans can be changed but preferably not personnel. Let a small committee not necessarily all appointed to the seminary, formulate and decide action. The provincial and his council should be informed at all times of the plans and work of the person or persons charged with formation so that the whole province is aware of what is going on and supports this work. It is important, even when there is a committee for formation, that one man clearly be in charge. Another point to consider is that some seminarians feel the need to interrupt their studies for six months or a year to pull things together, examine their commitment. It is important they be sent to a house with a good spirit.

Fr. Richardson mentioned that a plan of formation has not been formulated for the whole community as yet but hoped the matter will be dealt with in the 1980 assembly. Till then each province formulate its own, referring to pertinent Roman documents.

The point of having the laity involved in our works was brought up. Everywhere there is an awareness of this need and efforts being made to bring in willing lay people to assist in our work.

We then came to the matter of collaboration between provinces. Fr. Kapusciak indicated some problems in mission areas due to lack of personnel. Formation in India, Indonesia and the Philippines, spiritual director in Nigeria, an Indian confrere to Nigeria for pastoral work, one or more Philipinos for work in Japan. To develop community unity in area interchange newsletters and compose an area bulletin.

We then spoke of St. Vincent's complete dedication to mission work in far away places. He willingly sacrificed his best men for this work. St. Vincent urged the missionaries to look for the good in people they went to evangelise and to learn from them. Fr. Michael K. of India told of how in the beginning of the Spanish confreres work in India many died when

quite young but the Spanish province continued to send men. Fr. Kapusciak noted that St. Vincent sent men to Madagascar when the entire congregation numbered less than present day provinces in Asia. St. Vincent often said he was sending a man who was his right hand.

Fr. Richardson gave a brief historical résumé of the provinces represented at the meeting. He urged that we prepare ourselves to respond to calls from legitimate authority for assistance in mission areas by renewal of spirit.

Next each one reported on how the decisions of the general assemblies of 1968-69 and 1974 were put into practise in his province. In referring to the coming 1980 General Assembly urged us to avoid power politics as being completely undesirable and unfitting if we are to know God's will for the Congregation. The Oriental provinces have an important contribution to make to the assembly. He stressed the importance of preparing by reading all documents beforehand.

The last matters discussed were an annual area bulletin and the details of the next regional meeting. Fr. Michael accepted responsibility for compiling the first issue of the bulletin titled, «Vincentians in Asia - Oceania». The deadline for sending in material is March 31st 1979.

It was decided that the next regional meeting will take place in India July 18-19th 1979 with Fr. Michael as convenor. The address is Berhampur Vijay Bhavan India.

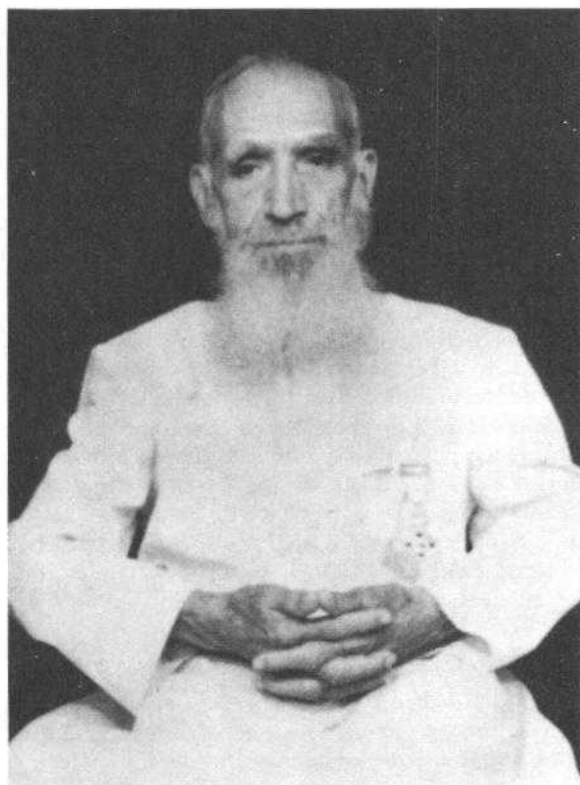
On the agenda for this meeting are the documents of preparation for the 1980 General Assembly.

Fr. Turnbull after expressing thanks to the Superior General, Fr. Kapusciak and other visitors present formally closed the meeting.

BIOGRAPHIAE SODALIIUM

INDIA. Valeriano Güemes Rodríguez, (1980-1978)

Nace el P. Valeriano Güemes Rodríguez, en Quintanarroz el 12 de octubre de 1980. Sus padres Valentín y Eugenia.



P. VALERIANO GÜEMES RODRÍGUEZ

Estudia «Humanidades» en Tardajos. Ingresa en el noviciado de los Paúles, en Madrid, el 25.IX.1906 y profesa en 1908.

Sacerdote el 29.VIII.1915, ejerce de profesor en el Seminario Menor (Apostólico) de los Paúles de Teruel durante cinco años.

El 8 de agosto de 1920 es destinado a predicar misiones populares en la diócesis de Madrid-Alcalá. En abril del mismo año pasa al Colegio de Limpías en calidad de profesor de urgencia.

El 18 de julio de 1921 es destinado con tres Paúles más a la fundación de una misión en Indostán, a donde llega el 26 de diciembre de 1921.

Ha muerto en la India el 12 de diciembre de 1978, a los 57 continuos de misionero y 88 y dos meses de edad. Nunca volvió a España ni fue a parte alguna del mundo. Cuantas invitaciones le hicieron, singularmente a España y Filipinas, las agradeció cortésmente, pero las rechazó con firmeza.

Misionero de llanura y de montaña selvática en diversos distritos de Orissa, ha muerto «con las armas en la mano», como él quería. De mozo montó en bicicleta y moto; de anciano, ha hecho innumerables excursiones a lugares intrincados a pie, dejando algunas veces sus huellas de sangre en el camino.

En octubre próximo pasado fue el P. Valdaviva a visitarle en su residencia de Mohana y tuvo que volverse sin verlo, porque se hallaba de excursión apostólica, Dios sabe dónde.

Superior de la Misión de Cuttack por los años 27-32, renunció a la mitra en perspectiva, que recayó en el P. Sanz, del cual había escrito el 30 de agosto de 1927: «Si se deciden a nombrar vicevisitador, pongan la vista en el P. Sanz».

La Santa Sede le otorgó la Medalla «Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice» y el Gobierno Español en 1973, la Cruz y Título de Caballero de la Orden de Isabel la Católica.

El pueblo le hace santo

Así, con la peregrina transcripción de la semicanonización popular, que no quiere predisponer la pontificia, nos vemos impulsados a empezar esta nada común necrología, mejor hagiografía. La afirmación la canta la máquina de escribir con la espontaneidad y moral certidumbre que la preludiaron y corean tantos y tantos labios en España y especialmente en la India.

Para curarme en salud de acusaciones de ligereza, podría servirme del testimonio de un provincial de los Paúles más a propósito para fiscal que para promotor de causas, Doctor en Teología y Filosofía, visitante que fue de la viceprovincia misionera de Cuttack en 1945, llevando de guía al P. Güemes: «Este

hombre es un santo. Caramba, caramba!, cuentan que ha hecho milagros».

Y el provincial de allá, P. Urdangarin: «Al P. Güemes podrán achacarle errores, pero mala voluntad, jamás».

Y un misionero en tiempos polémicos de la misión: «¿Pecados, dice V., del P. Güemes? Yo nunca vi en él sino virtudes».

Yo mismo, testigo de su actuación y conducta por espacio de 24 años, afirmé en ocasión solemne, sin que nadie después me haya contradecido: «Si entre nosotros hay algún misionero canonizable es el P. Güemes».

En 1934 el P. Güemes escribía: «... Mi día no está lejano. Cosa bien extraordinaria será que un misionero llegue a morir de edad avanzada».

Presentimiento, gracias a Dios, fallido. El ha sido, él solo, esa «cosa extraordinaria», ya que ha muerto a sus 88 años de edad y 57 de misionero en tan difícil misión como la de Cuttack, precedido de 22 misioneros que se fueron antes que él a la misión del cielo.

Su nombre y su fama habían traspuesto las fronteras familiares vicencianas. Manuel de Unciti le dedicó una parrafada como a cincel tallada en las páginas de su «Revista Misionera» en 1971, con ocasión de la muerte de Mons. Tobar, tardajeño, Obispo de Cuttack.

El P. Güemes ha sido una figura misional egregia, alma gigante, asceta y apóstol en una pieza. Gastó su vida larga en la predicación del evangelio. Supo querer a los parias y ellos le creyeron y le quisieron por millares convertidos del Hinduismo al Cristianismo. Renunció, siendo superior de la misión, a ser obispo. Un biógrafo le llama obispo sin mitra, pues varias veces substituyó al titular en ausencia sin solideo, como a los provinciales sin patente.

¿Hacia los altares? No es aventurado el pronóstico. Las noticias que nos llegan acerca de sus funerales, o más bien glorificación «post mortem», corroboran el aserto. Cuántos santos dejaron de inmediato estelas menos luminosas de santidad! Nos quedan muchas páginas impresas, veneros de su historia ejemplar y cartas apostólicas como evangelios. Testimonios vivientes a millares. Documentos de un proceso probable de beatificación, quiera Dios que no tardío, de esta indudable santa y grande figura misionera y sacerdotal, destacable entre los santos y grandes misioneros de todos los tiempos.

Ahora después de su muerte infinidad de peregrinos acuden a su sepulcro. Rezan, lloran y piden milagros ante su sepulcro. Veneran aquel anciano cuerpo delgado, encorvado, malcilito, yerto, y le envían besos como para reanimarlo. Indios que, por

cristianos, no creen en la transmigración de las almas, mas si en su inmortalidad.

Por eso, en el cementerio, suplican al Padre que glorifique a su amado «Güemes Suami» y le dicen, confiados a aquél, como este les enseñó: «Ge, ambomanonco suorgosto Pita» (Padre nuestro, que estás en los cielos).

Elías Fuente. (Diario de Burgos, 4.1.1979).

Testimony of Fr. V. Urbaneja

On the day of the funeral of the late Rev. Fr. Valerian Güemes, C.M. we could see the progress the Catholic Church has made during the last fifty seven years of the history of the Mission.

When Rev. Fr. V. Güemes, C.M. first came to India in 1921, there were only three or four Francilian Priests from France to greet him and his companions. At that time they were the only Catholic Priests in the whole area which, later on, would be known as and called the «Mission of Cuttack». There were also a few Sisters belonging to the Congregation of St. Joseph of Annecy and a handful of Christians.

On the day of his funeral (13.12.1978) among those present to give him the last farewell to eternity were: His Grace the Most Rev. Henry D'Souza, Archbishop of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar, His Excellency Mgr. Thomas Thiruthalil, C.M., Bishop of Berhampur, Mgr. Jacob Vadakevettil, C.M., Prefect Apostolic of Balasore, Rev. Fr. Michael Kuzhikkattuchalil, C.M., Provincial of the Vincentians, more than 40 Priests from the 110 who are presently working in this area, both Vincentians and Diocesan, all educated by the Vincentians directly or in some Regional Seminaries, and ordained for the Mission of Cuttack, about 40 Daughters of Charity and some other Sisters among the 200 working to-day in this area, and finally thousands of Christians who had come at short notice to see for the last time the mortal remains of the late Rev. Fr. V. Güemes, C.M. whom they considered as their Father and their Faithful Shepherd and Pastor.

And all these works and progress are due, to a great extent, to the efforts and sacrifices of the late Rev. Fr. Valerian Güemes, C.M.

(Letter to the Superior General, 2.1.1979).

DEFUNCTI CONGREGATIONIS MISSIONIS

Oct 1978-Jan. 1979

N. NOMEN	Conditio	Dies ob.	Domus		
47 ARPOURETTES Louis	Sacerdos	9-10-78	Dax 5°	65	49
48 TIERNEY Gerald J.	Sacerdos	17-10-78	Dublin 11°	73	54
49 NOGUEIRA Armando	Sacerdos	18- 9-78	Rio de Janeiro 11°	63	41
50 CORVELEIJN Nico	Sacerdos	25-10-78	Willemstad	46	26
51 ALBIOL Enrique	Sacerdos	27-10-78	Madrid 1°	75	49
52 BOSC Rémi	Sacerdos	31-10-78	Dax	73	54
53 CORTÉS F. Cayetano	Frater	25-10-78	Valencia 9°	62	44
54 FITZGERALD James H.	Sacerdos	29-10-78	Eastwood	84	55
55 KENNEDY Joseph T.	Sacerdos	8-11-78	Philadelphia	75	49
56 WEHBE Camille	Sacerdos	15-11-78	Beyrouth	41	21
57 VITULLO Silvio	Sacerdos	1-12-78	Siena	72	52
58 SINKO Lipot	Frater	28-10-78	Pannonhalma	90	74
59 SMITH Simon	Sacerdos	7-12-78	St. Louis 11°	65	47
60 GÜEMES Valeriano	Sacerdos	12-12-78	Aligonda	88	72
61 VIDAL John R.	Sacerdos	2-12-78	New Orleans 8°	57	38
62 ZAKRZEWSKI Ignacy	Sacerdos	15-12-78	Warszawa 17°	66	46
63 CURTIS Lawrence D.	Sacerdos	8-12-78	Emmitsburg 5°	76	57
64 PIOTROWSKI Sigismundo	Sacerdos	13-12-78	Curitiba 1°	22	3
65 STIGARE Vincente	Diaconus	17-11-78	Curitiba 1°	75	52
66 BELINOVSKI Francisco	Sacerdos	17-11-78	Araucaria 3°	28	7
67 KOSNAC Wendelin	Frater	14-12-78	Slovakia	64	44
68 ESTÉVEZ Juan	Frater	31-10-78	Los Milagros 11°	76	46

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5 BERKOWSKY Edmund	Sacerdos	2- 1-79	Perryville 9°	82	56
2 MEIJS Jacques	Sacerdos	14- 1-79	Panningen 1°	80	61
3 VAN BAVEL Fons	Sacerdos	14- 1-79	Panningen 1°	44	25
4 SANGERMANI Mario	Sacerdos	7- 2-79	Siena	74	56
5 MEYER Cyril F.	Sacerdos	4- 2-79	Jamaica 9°	77	59
6 PELLETIER Louis	Sacerdos	11- 2-79	Montpellier 10°	69	47
7 PÉREZ Feliciano	Frater	31- 1-79	Murguía 14°	68	46
8 PERESSUTTI Umberto.	Sacerdos	14- 2-79	Betroka 2°	56	39
9 MORAL Félix	Sacerdos	5- 2-79	Cumaná 10°	86	69

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P. HENZMANN, C. M., Secr. Gen.

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